

2009 Memphis Poll

**The Sixteenth Memphis Poll
1993-2009**

March 30, 2009

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Herenton Administration is pleased to sponsor the sixteenth annual Memphis Poll. The first Memphis Poll was produced in 1993 and proved to be useful to both the Herenton Administration and the Memphis community. Mayor W.W. Herenton conceived of and continues to support the Memphis Poll. The City of Memphis Division of Finance coordinates the Poll.

Purpose of the Memphis Poll

The purpose of the 2009 Memphis Poll is to provide a procedure by which citizens' views can become part of the planning and budgeting process. The City views its citizens as customers and its services as a product. Like any successful business, the City is making a concerted effort to learn how satisfied citizens are with its services.

The Poll results help the administration set priorities and evaluate the quality of its services. This report and similar studies conducted in other cities suggest that citizens can effectively describe the quality of their City services. Citizens have the unique ability to define the services that they consider most important, which may or may not differ from the concerns of City administrators.

The Poll provides data for the current budget process and influences long-range City policies. The polling manager used scientific techniques and had an independent company collect the data. The analysis was conducted independent of both the company collecting the data and City of Memphis officials.

City officials offered editorial suggestions that made the writing of the Poll much stronger. This involvement of City officials is an important part of the process since it leads to their greater use of the polling information.

Since the Memphis Poll has sixteen years of comparative data, the 2009 Poll includes extensive trend data for City services and policies. The trend data are a "policy treasure" in that they show how services are perceived over an extended period. There are few cities that can claim a data set of this quality and magnitude. The Poll has been an annual event since 1993, except for 2006 when it was cancelled due to budgetary reasons.

The text below refers to the 2009 Memphis Poll, unless it specifically mentions earlier Polls. The data are reported both in text and graphics that can be interpreted by the lay reader. Many of the trend charts compare the findings of all sixteen years.

Polling Method

The Memphis Poll employed scientific polling procedures, including random digit dialing, to select the respondents. The polling process produced 915 respondents. The actual interviewing occurred between October 16 to November 3, 2008 and the report was issued for use with the FY 2009 budget process. The preliminary results were provided to the Division of Finance and the City of Memphis Directors in December 2008. The Executive Summary was provided in February 2009 and this report was released in March 2009.

The 2009 Memphis Poll replicated procedures from the earlier Memphis Polls. The random sampling procedures resulted in a group of citizens similar to earlier Polls.¹

The Poll results provide information on citizens' assessments of a variety of programs and policies. The major categories of questions included actual services, policies, and concerns. The Poll asked tangible questions about City services.

The reader should not confuse the Memphis Poll with other polls reporting on similar topics. The Memphis Poll deals only with the perceptions of *Memphis* citizens. The Poll examines issues, services, and policies directly affected by the City government. It also presents some information by various geographic sections of the City—see Chapter 20 for a base map of these areas.

The Poll report provides information about the response rates for various questions. Respondents were asked to only provide answers when they were familiar with programs. Response rates range from as low as 4 percent to 100 percent, depending on the question and whether the citizen was eligible to

¹ The Poll reflected the white and African American populations of the City. It also reflected the geography of the City. It did not reflect the Hispanic population. Hispanics are under-represented in both the Memphis Poll and the U.S. Census. They are a difficult population to poll. Some suggestions have been made to the City on conducting a special poll of the Hispanic community. The Memphis Poll suggests that the City should partner with nonprofits, County, and State governments in such an effort. As an example, see Mary Powers, "Hispanics hit health care's speech barrier," *Commercial Appeal*, February 7, 2004.

answer a specific question. Chapter 20 provides the number of respondents for each geographic section of the City.

The Poll results reported response differences between African American and white respondents that were 10 percentage points or greater.²

The 2009 Memphis Poll asked citizens to respond to 149 different questions regarding various issues. The results are displayed in 116 different charts, maps, and tables throughout this report.

Numerous people worked on the Poll and their contributions were invaluable. Yacoubian Research assisted with questionnaire formation and performed the actual interviewing. Dr. Michael Kirby prepared the poll questions, formatted the survey, and computerized the results.³ He also wrote the final report. Dr. Kirby used the appropriate procedures to bring objectivity and balance to the report. Tom Kirby provided analysis of the Poll results. Jan Kirby edited the full report. Kristen Fitzpatrick was the senior editor for the report and was responsible for both editing and analysis. Special thanks are due to Richard Campbell and Phillip Devasia for coordinating the City efforts related to the Poll. Special thanks are also due to Roland McElrath, Director of Finance, and James Stokes, Deputy Director of Finance, for their support of the Memphis Poll.

Poll Summary

A separate *Executive Summary* has been prepared, which describes the major findings of the 2009 Memphis Poll in an abbreviated format. The full report and the executive summary are available at the City of Memphis Website: www.memphistn.gov.

As with the previous Memphis Polls, the major conclusion of the 2009 Memphis Poll is that citizens feel positive about the City's services and its public policies. In fact, the findings showed widespread improvements in a variety of services.

² The response rates for race were: 98 percent of the citizens provided their race and 97 percent of the citizens were African American or white. When only these two groups were examined, 55 percent of the respondents were African American and 45 percent were white.

³ Dr. Kirby, a faculty member at Rhodes College, Plough Professor of Urban Studies, and an Associate Professor of Political Science, has conducted many Memphis studies including the previous Memphis Polls. He has also served as a consultant on many national studies. Dr. Kirby specializes in the use of social science data for policy-making purposes.

There were an impressive number of services rated very highly by the citizens that received scores of 90 percent or more. These included the Division of Fire Services' fire department (respectfulness, performance, and promptness), Division of Fire Services' EMS program (respectfulness, promptness, and performance), Division of Park Services (Pink Palace Museum, Botanic Garden, and Zoo), Division of Public Works (promptness in weekly solid waste pickup and recycling), Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods' Public Library and Information Center (main library, helpfulness of staff, availability of materials, overall quality of branches, and availability of computers), Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division (drinking water, field workers, and reliability of utilities), and the Health Department (vital records).

The 2009 Poll continued to show substantial improvements in perceptions of crime. Citizens felt crime had been reduced, whether they were asked a general question about crime or if they were asked about more specific crime categories. Crime concerns decreased the most in Midtown (Union Station), and Northwest & Northside (Old Allen Station).

In addition, citizens were increasingly pleased with the services delivered by the Division of Police Services. They felt officers were respectful of citizens in their neighborhoods, were more prompt in responding to crime, and were doing a good job preventing crime. Citizens who were aware of Blue Crush, a crime prevention strategy, in their neighborhoods thought it was doing a good job of addressing serious crime. Also, citizens thought that 911 operators were professional and courteous in dealing with citizens.

Citizens reported improvements when asked about many physical conditions in their neighborhoods. The Division of Community Enhancement was operating in its first year to address these issues, and citizens thought the agency had an impact. Its areas of responsibility—rundown houses, weeds & trash on vacant lots, and litter on public streets—received improved scores from the citizens.

Citizens also identified some services about which they were concerned. Memphis Light, Gas and Water's (MLGW) cost of utilities and Division of Park Services' public swimming pools were seen as highly problematic services—these findings are consistent with a number of earlier Memphis Polls. In addition, citizens were concerned about how well agencies responded to their calls to City Hall complaining about services. Specifically, they were concerned about whether the agencies were solving the problem that generated the call.

Citizens rated crime protection as the most important priority of the City, closely followed by fire protection. In comparison, they gave very low ratings to the large public development projects, such as the Liberty Bowl, Pyramid & Convention Center, and riverfront development—indicating a lower priority for these projects.

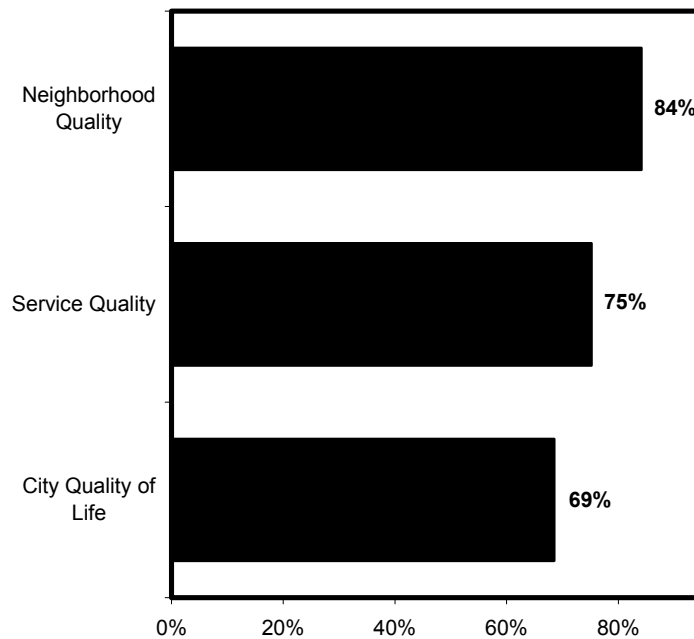
Chapter 2

Overall Assessment

Overall Assessment

This analysis of the Memphis Poll begins by examining the citizens' overall assessment of the City and its services. Figure 2-1 provides three broad measures in the Memphis Poll that address the citizens' overall perceptions of the City and its services.⁴

Figure 2-1: Overall "Quality" Assessment by Citizens



The Memphis Poll measured overall neighborhood quality. Specifically, the Poll asked citizens if they thought their neighborhoods would be a better place to live, about the same, or a worse place to live one year from now. Figure 2-1 shows that 84 percent of the citizens thought that the quality of their neighborhoods would be either the same or better.

Service quality refers to the citizens' satisfaction with the delivery of City of Memphis public services. It is a measure of overall citizens' satisfaction with

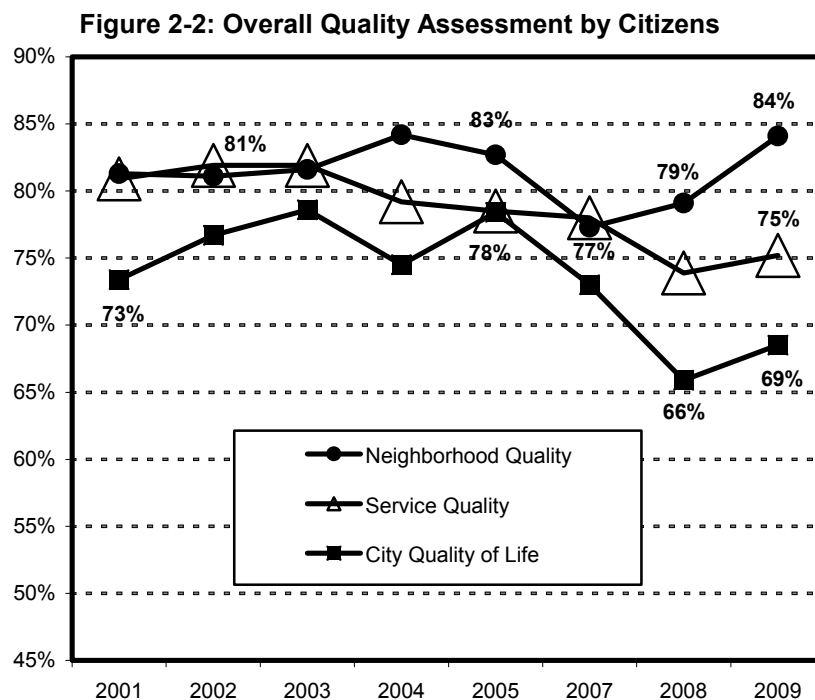
⁴ The response rates for these measures were: neighborhood quality (98 percent), service quality (98 percent), and City quality of life (99 percent).

City services. Figure 2-1 shows that 75 percent of the citizens agreed that the City did a good job of delivering services.

The Memphis Poll also measured quality of life with a broad question. Citizens were asked if they were satisfied with Memphis as a place to live. Figure 2-1 shows that 69 percent of the citizens were satisfied.

Trend Data

Figure 2-2 shows the trends in the overall quality measures from 2001 to 2009, the years in which all these data were collected.



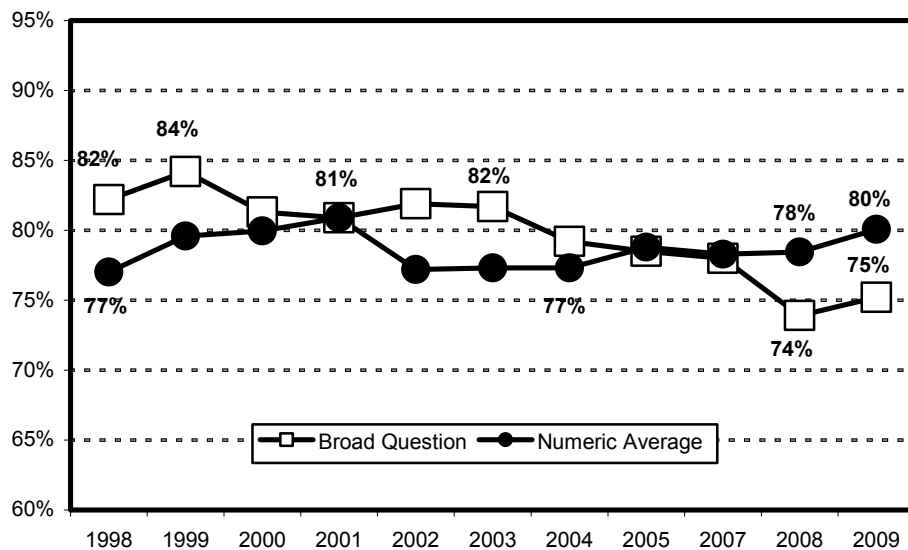
The findings about neighborhood quality were the most positive of the three measures in Figure 2-2. Not only was it the highest of the three scores, but the neighborhood quality score also showed a considerable improvement from the earlier 2007 and 2008 Polls. The score increased 7 percentage points from 2007 to 2009.

In contrast, City quality of life was the most problematic of the findings. In 2001, 73 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the City's quality of life. By 2005, the measure had risen to 78 percent, but in 2008, the results declined to 66 percent. However, the 2009 Poll results showed an improvement of 3 percentage points to 69 percent.

Service quality, as depicted in Figure 2-2, shows a marginal yearly decline from a high of 81 percent in 2002 and 2003 to its lowest score of 74 percent in 2008. The results in 2009 showed a rating of 75 percent, about the same as in 2008.

However, the findings for service quality are more complex than these data show. The Memphis Poll also uses a second measure of overall service quality, which is the numeric average of the services discussed in Chapter 19. The average score of 65 services, including police, parks, fire, and others, was examined. Figure 2-3 shows an average score of 80 percent satisfaction with City services, which is a 2 percentage-point improvement over the previous Poll. This numeric average has been relatively stable since the number of services surveyed has remained similar since 2007.⁵ The results of the broad service question and the numeric average of the ratings for multiple City services were identical in 2005 and 2007, yet they diverged somewhat in 2008 and 2009.

Figure 2-3: Overall Scores for City Services



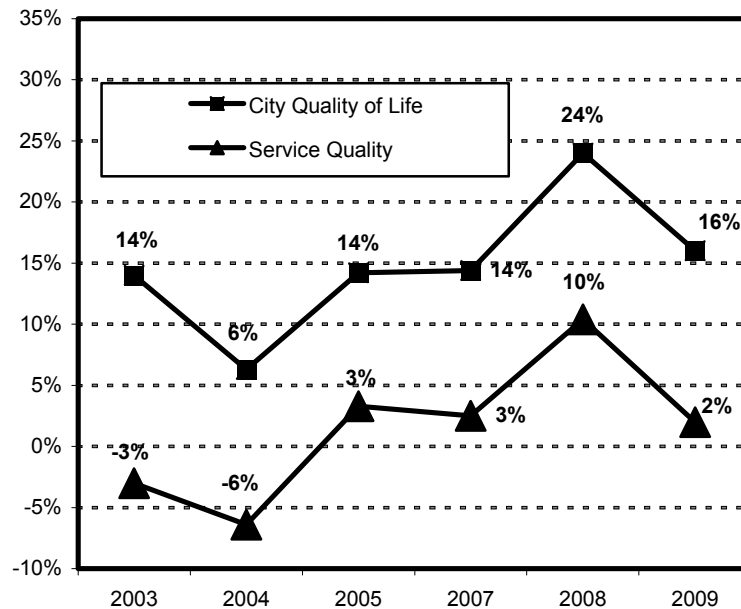
Race and Overall Measures

The 2009 results related to race are more positive than they were in the 2008 Poll. The difference for whites and African Americans' scores narrowed by 8 percentage points for City quality of life, although whites were slightly less satisfied than African Americans with the City's quality of life. The difference in the scores for whites and African Americans for service quality declined by 8

⁵ One service, the reliability of utilities, was added in 2009 and it did not change the overall score.

percentage points, and for all practical purposes, there was not a discernable difference between whites and African Americans on rating service quality – an impressive finding of the 2009 Poll.

Figure 2-4: Differences Between Whites and African Americans About Overall Quality



Sections of the City

These three measures of overall quality were examined by sections of the City. The sections provide specific information for different geographical areas of the City. However, the data must be used carefully since each individual section had only a limited number of respondents.⁶ The responses for the three measures were averaged for each section of the City. Figure 2-5 displays the results with the most positive areas (overall score) at the top, while Figure 2-6 provides the same data with the least positive responses listed at the top.

Figure 2-5 shows the most positive responses for all three measures by section of the City, as well as an average overall score.⁷ Southside had the highest overall rating when the three items were averaged. Southside also had the highest score

⁶ See Chapter 20 for a discussion of the sections of the City.

⁷ Each measure was considered independently and the highest ratings are discussed. The areas are listed in order of the overall most and least positive response. Only the very highest ratings were discussed for most positive perceptions and only the very lowest ratings were discussed for the least positive responses.

in 2007 and 2008.⁸ Eight other areas followed closely with scores from 74 percent to 78 percent.

Southside had the highest score for neighborhood quality with a 90 percent rating. Six other areas followed closely with scores from 84 percent to 86 percent. Downtown and Midtown had the highest ratings for neighborhood quality in both 2007 and 2008.

Figure 2-5: Most Positive Perceptions by Area

Area of City	Neighborhood Quality	Service Quality	City Quality of Life	Overall Score
Southside	90%	86%	84%	87%
Southwest	85%	73%	77%	78%
Southcentral	86%	75%	73%	78%
Northeast	84%	74%	73%	77%
Downtown	86%	67%	77%	77%
Northside	84%	76%	69%	76%
Southeast	82%	78%	66%	75%
Northwest	80%	78%	67%	75%
Midtown	86%	70%	64%	74%
Eastside	80%	74%	56%	70%
Fareast	82%	73%	48%	68%

Southside also had the highest score for service quality with an 86 percent rating. Eight other areas followed with scores from 73 percent to 78 percent. Northeast and Southcentral had the highest scores for service quality in the 2008 Memphis Poll.

Southside had the highest rating for City quality of life with 84 percent satisfaction. Southside also had the highest scores in the 2007 and 2008 Memphis Polls. Four other areas followed with scores that ranged from 73 percent to 77 percent.

The most interesting overall finding is that, unlike earlier years of the Poll, one area, Southside, scored highest on every one of the indicators. In addition, the second tier of areas showed only limited variations for each of the indicators. In other words, there was more consistency among the areas than previous Memphis Polls except for Southside which had substantially higher scores in every one of the measures.

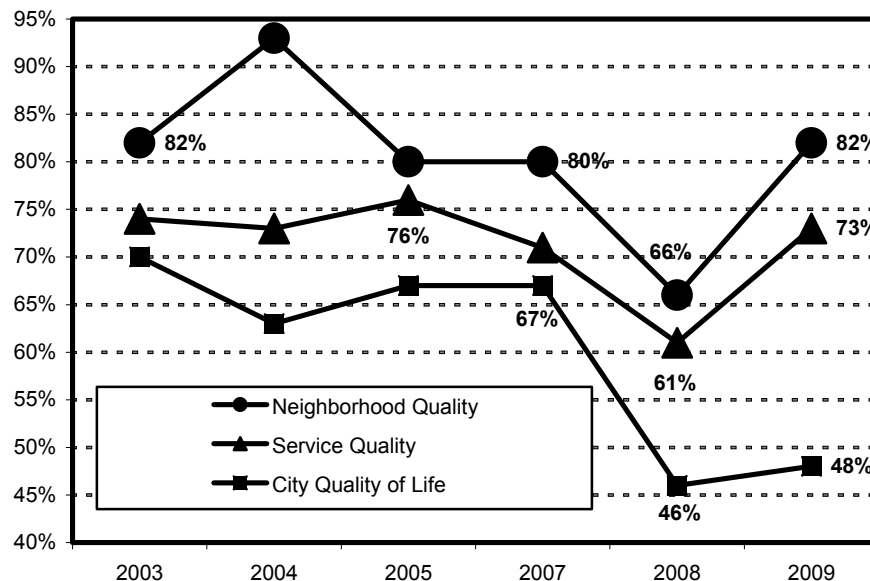
⁸ Downtown and Southside were tied for the highest overall scores in 2008.

Figure 2-6: Least Positive Perceptions by Area

Area of City	Neighborhood Quality	Service Quality	City Quality of Life	Overall Scores
Fareast	82%	73%	48%	68%
Eastside	80%	74%	56%	70%
Midtown	86%	70%	64%	74%
Downtown	80%	78%	67%	75%
Northeast	82%	78%	66%	75%
Southeast	84%	76%	69%	76%
Northside	86%	67%	77%	77%
Southcentral	84%	74%	73%	77%
Northwest	86%	75%	73%	78%
Southwest	85%	73%	77%	78%
Southside	90%	86%	84%	87%

Figure 2-6 displays the same data for areas of the City with the least positive scores for overall quality indicators. Fareast and Eastside had the lowest overall scores. Fareast stood out with the lowest rating on City quality of life in both 2009 and 2008. Northside and Midtown had the lowest ratings for service quality. Four areas had scores on the low end for neighborhood quality, but they were so closely grouped that it was difficult to single out any area as being low on neighborhood quality.

Figure 2-7: Overall Ratings for Fareast Section of the City



The Poll further examined the trend data for the three measures for the Fareast section of the City. Figure 2-7 shows that Fareast residents felt more positive about neighborhood quality and service quality than in the previous year of the Memphis Poll. Neighborhood quality improved by 16 percentage points, while

the score on service quality improved by 12 percentage points. The improvements reverse a multi-year decline in ratings for these two measures.

In contrast, the results for quality of life took a tumble of 21 percentage points from 2007 to 2008, and the results for 2009 remain at that lower level.

Key Findings

- ❑ Citizens' assessment of the quality of their neighborhoods has improved over the 2008 Memphis Poll. In addition, the citizens gave slightly higher overall scores to the quality of services and the City quality of life.
- ❑ Citizens' assessment of service quality was more complicated, and later chapters demonstrate improved levels of services compared to the previous year of the Memphis Poll.
- ❑ Southside residents had the most positive overall assessment of the City. However, many other areas were grouped together, which suggest minimal variation between other sections of the City.
- ❑ Residents of Fareast had the least positive overall assessment of the City. However, their scores for neighborhood quality and services quality improved dramatically. Fareast residents remain very concerned about the City quality of life.

Chapter 3

Service Priorities

This chapter examines the importance that citizens attached to various City services. Decisions to improve specific services can be based on those services to which citizens attached a greater priority.

This is an especially important chapter since it provides a context for viewing services and concerns. The reader should match the evaluation for a specific service (for example, police) to the level of importance that the citizens attach to the service (for example, crime prevention). Citizens may view a service as very important, but they may perceive that the level of the service delivery is mediocre. Or, citizens may perceive a problem as very extensive, but they may attach a lower priority to solving that problem.

Citizens were asked how important various priorities were to the overall quality of Memphis. Figure 3-1 shows the percentage of citizens who thought the services were “very important” to the overall quality of Memphis.⁹ Figure 3-1 reports on citizens’ ratings in 2009 while Figure 3-2 reports priorities in which there was a difference between 2008 and 2009. Figure 3-3 reports differences between African American and white citizens.¹⁰ Figure 3-4 provides the specific wording of the items included in the survey.

Tier 1: Highest Priority Services

Crime protection received the highest priority ranking by the citizens. Figure 3-1 shows that 84 percent thought police protection against crime was the most important service provided by the City. Crime protection has consistently been ranked as the highest priority since the inception of the Memphis Poll.

Fire protection followed with 79 percent of the citizens rating it an important priority of the City.

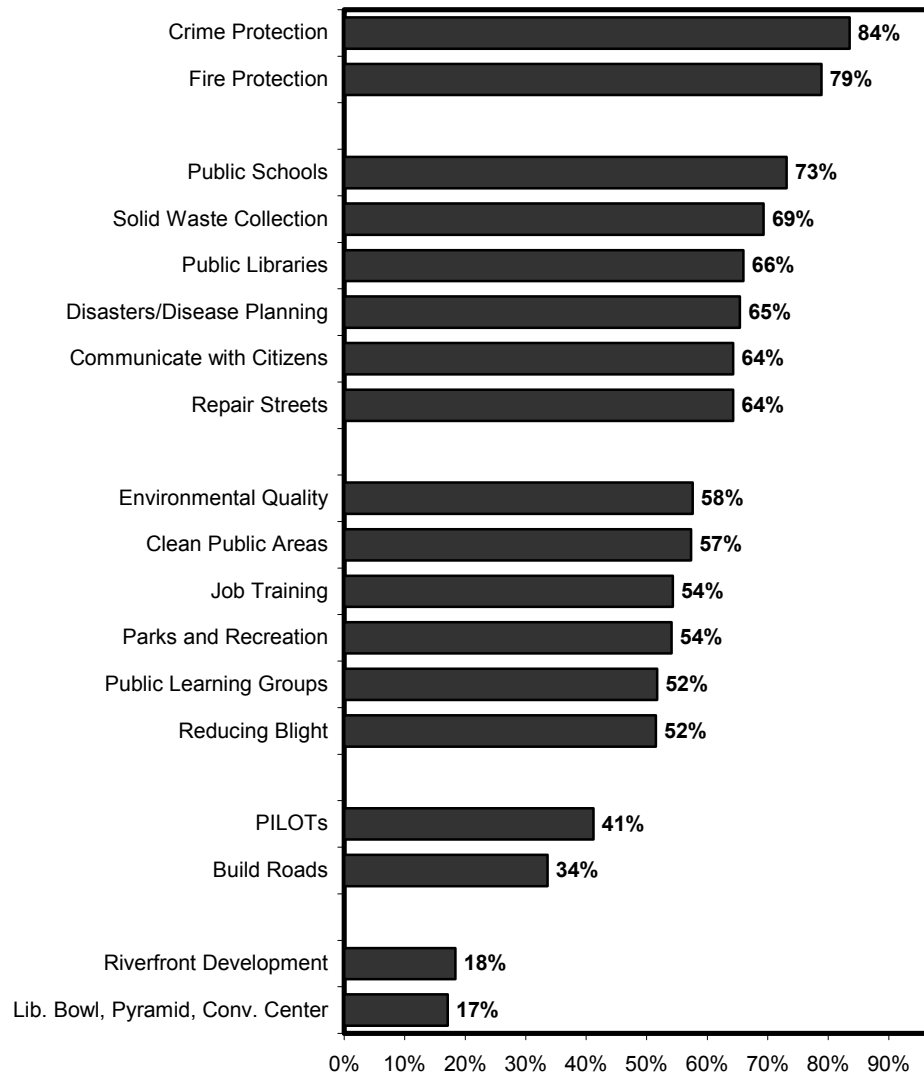
Figure 3-3 shows that African Americans identified crime protection as a higher priority than whites did by 15 percentage points. In contrast, whites identified

⁹ The responses rates for these questions were very high, ranging from 95 to 100 percent.

¹⁰ The Memphis Poll reports response differences between African Americans and whites that are 10 percent or greater.

fire protection as a higher priority than African Americans did by 11 percentage points.

Figure 3-1: Citizens' Ranking of Service Priorities



Tier 2: High Priority Services

As displayed in Figure 3-1, high priority services ranged from 64 to 73 percent. Citizens thought that the following were high priority services: public schools (73 percent),¹¹ solid waste collection (69 percent), public libraries (66 percent),

¹¹ Funding for schools, as a City budget line item, was eliminated in fiscal year 2008, although provisions were made for some funding. There is also a court case, which is being appealed, that would restore the funding.

disaster/disease planning (65 percent), communicating with citizens (64 percent), and repairing streets (64 percent).

Table 3-2 shows that disaster/disease planning declined as a priority between 2009 and 2008 by 7 percentage points.

Tier 3: Moderate Priority Services

The third tier is categorized as moderate priority services. As displayed in Figure 3-1, these services ranged from 52 to 58 percent. Though these services are considered valuable, close to half of the citizens did not rate them very important.

Tier 3 priorities included environmental quality (58 percent), cleaning public areas (57 percent), job training (54 percent), parks & recreation (54 percent), public learning groups (52 percent), and reducing blight (52 percent).

**Figure 3-2: Service Priorities with Lower Ratings
2009 Compared to 2008**

Service Priority	Difference	2009	2008
Reducing Blight	-8%	51.5%	59.5%
Clean Public Areas	-8%	57.3%	65.7%
Improving Environmental Quality	-7%	57.6%	64.5%
Disasters/Disease Planning	-7%	65.4%	72.0%

Note: Other priorities were very similar in the two years

Figure 3-2 shows that the following priorities had lower scores in 2009 than in 2008: reducing blight, cleaning public areas, and environmental quality.

Figure 3-3 reveals that African Americans placed a higher priority on job training, reducing blight, and parks & recreation programs than whites did.

Tier 4: Low Priority Services

Tier 4 includes low priority services, which range from 34 percent to 41 percent. Almost two-thirds of the citizens did not think these were very important, including PILOTs¹² (41 percent) and building roads (34 percent).

¹² PILOTs are property tax breaks that create jobs.

Though African Americans placed greater importance on PILOTs and building roads than whites, they still considered them a low priority.

Tier 5: Very Lowest Priority Services

Tier 5 contains the very lowest priority services with less than one-fifth of the citizens supporting these options. These services were related to large development projects, including riverfront development (18 percent) and funding improvements to the Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, Pyramid, & Convention Center (17 percent).

Figure 3-3: Citizens Ranking of Service Priorities Higher Priorities for African Americans Compared to Whites

Priorities	Percentage Point Difference	African Americans	Whites
Job Training	26%	65%	40%
Reduce Blight	16%	59%	43%
Crime Protection	15%	61%	46%
Recreation Programs	15%	61%	46%
PILOTs	14%	47%	33%
Liberty Bowl, Pyramid, Convention Center	12%	22%	10%
Build Roads	10%	38%	28%
Fire Protection	-11%	74%	85%

Figure 3-3 shows African Americans placed a higher priority on funding improvements to the Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, Pyramid, & Convention Center than whites did. However, these scores were still very low.¹³

¹³ Computations in Figure 3-3 were made to the fifth decimal and not the whole number. Thus, there will be rounding error in the percentage-point difference.

Figure 3-4: Specific Questions for Priorities

1. Building new streets and roads
2. Repaving and patching potholes on existing streets
3. Providing fire protection
4. Cleaning public areas by sweeping streets, picking up litter, mowing vacant lots
5. Providing police protection against crime
6. Providing recreational programs and park facilities for children, adults, and seniors
7. Addressing environmental quality of the air, rivers, and streams
8. Providing garbage collection services
9. Funding public learning groups such as the zoo, the museums, and the arts
10. Funding the public libraries
11. Funding the City School system
12. Communicating with citizens and responding to their requests
13. Planning for and responding to natural disasters, terrorists and diseases
14. Reducing blight, revitalizing neighborhoods and providing affordable housing
15. Providing property tax breaks (called PILOTS) to businesses who would then create new jobs
16. Providing job training for unemployed and underemployed Memphians
17. Funding improvements to Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, the Pyramid and Convention Center
18. Funding improvements for the Riverfront such as the boat landing, walkways, & sidewalk cafes

Key Findings

- ❑ Crime protection had the highest priority ranking of any City service. It was closely followed by providing fire protection.
- ❑ Building new roads and PILOTS, which are property tax breaks for businesses, were low priorities for citizens.
- ❑ Two other services were ranked as very low priorities: large development projects (Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, Pyramid & Convention Center) and riverfront development.

Chapter 4

Concerns about Crime

This chapter examines the citizens' assessment of crime in their neighborhoods. It also provides information about specific types of crime-related concerns. When interpreting the data in this chapter, a lower number means that citizens were less concerned about crime.

Indicators of Specific Crimes

This section describes the portion of the Memphis Poll that deals with citizens' perceptions of specific crimes in their neighborhoods. A select number of crime-related indicators were examined to detect how well City services were addressing problems most immediate to citizens' own neighborhoods. This chapter is important since citizens described the quality of their immediate living environment.

Figure 4-1: Citizens' Concerns About Specific Crime Problems in Neighborhoods

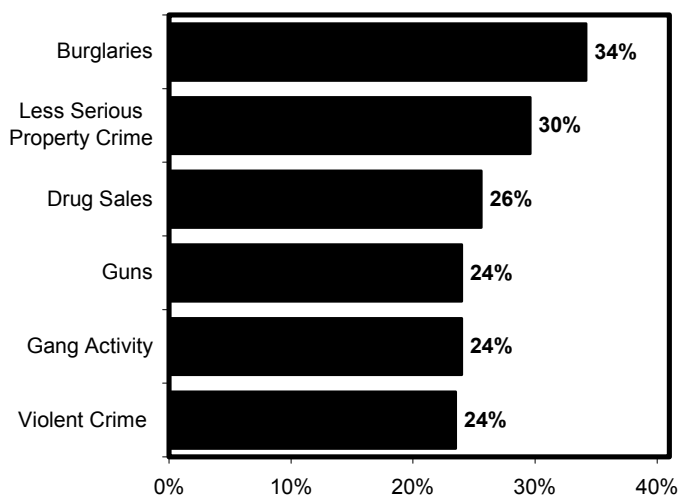


Figure 4-1 presents the data as the percentage of citizens who saw each listed crime issue as a serious problem.¹⁴ The specific indicators were relevant issues

¹⁴Citizens' concerns may or may not be influenced by the crime that actually occurs in the neighborhood. These data deal with concerns about crime and not the actual level of crime. The questions were developed to determine whether particular crime issues were concerns within the neighborhoods. Crime occurs in areas other than neighborhoods and the data may not be directly comparable to reported crime. The polling data are not directly comparable to reported crime since a number of reports could be generated from a single household. Not all crime is reported to the police. The polling measures reflect concerns about

for many Memphians.¹⁵ Violent crime is considered the most serious of all crimes. Burglaries are a concern for many because criminals are entering a person's home or other premises. Drug sales are seen as contributing to the seriousness of crime. Membership in a gang is not a crime, but it has been found that gangs extensively contribute to criminality. Guns are problematic in many neighborhoods and relate to some forms of violent crime. Less serious property crime was also included to round out the range of crimes that were likely to be problems in the citizens' neighborhoods.

Figure 4-1 shows that concerns about specific crime issues were extensive. Burglaries were the highest concern with 34 percent, followed by less serious property crime with 30 percent. Drug sales (26 percent), guns (24 percent), gang activity (24 percent), and violent crime (24 percent) were next on the list of crime concerns in the citizens' neighborhoods.

African Americans expressed greater concerns about guns and violent crime than whites did. The differences were 13 and 10 percentage points, respectively.

Trends in Crime

Long-term trend data are provided for burglaries, violent crime, drug sales, and gangs. Two years of trend data are provided for guns and less serious property crime since these two categories were new to the 2008 Memphis Poll.¹⁶ A trend line that moves down suggests that citizens were less concerned about crime over time.

The data below are compared most closely to the 2007 Memphis Poll since there was a "spike" in crime that year. Although crime concerns varied in the years prior to 2007, they were generally in the much lower range.

Figure 4-2 shows impressive and continuing improvement in the concerns about burglaries and violent crime. Concerns about burglaries and violent crime both showed a 13 percentage-point improvement over 2007. This means that concerns

particular types of crime, rather than a reflection of the total number of crimes. Several crime-related items do not translate directly into reported crime categories. The areas of specific concerns most applicable to police department statistics are violent crime, less serious property crime, and burglaries.

¹⁵ The response rates for these questions were: burglaries (99 percent), less serious property crime (98), drug sales (95 percent), guns (95 percent), gangs (96 percent), and violent crime (99 percent).

¹⁶ The questions were added at the request of the Division of Police Services to increase the number of crime types in the Memphis Poll.

about these two crimes have dramatically declined since the spike of 2007, but they are still on the high end over the 16 year time period.

Figure 4-2: Citizens' Concerns About Burglaries and Violent Crime

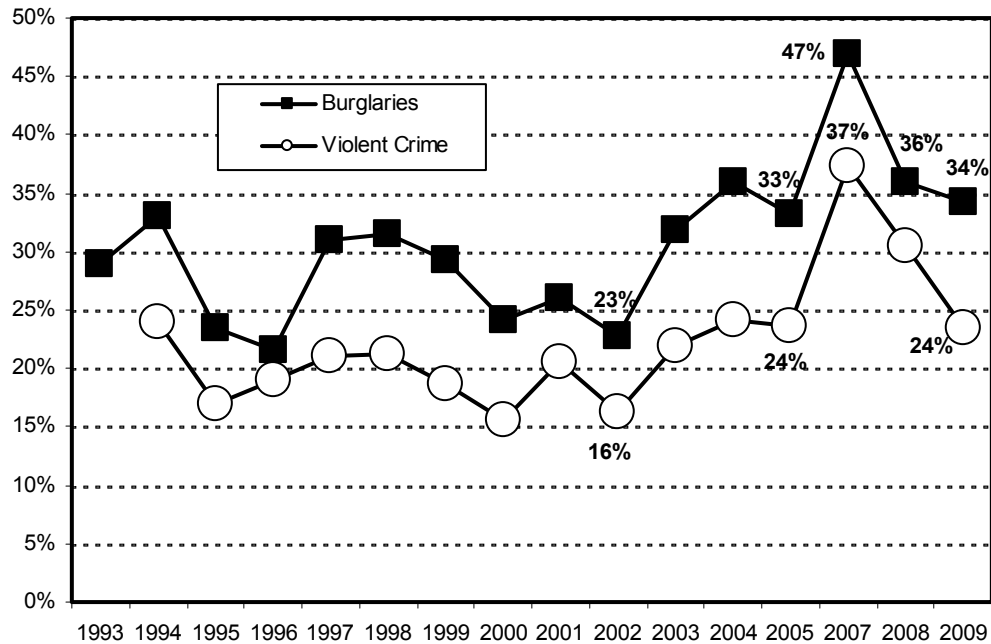
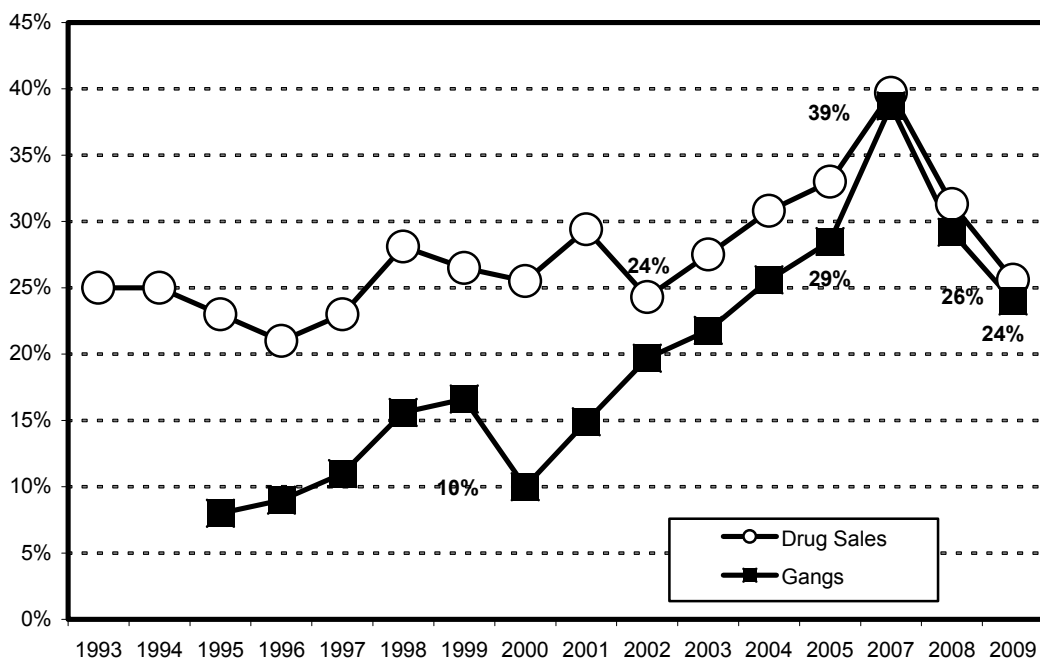


Figure 4-3 shows a similar pattern of impressive and continuing improvements for citizens' concerns about drug sales and gangs since 2007.

Figure 4-3: Citizens' Concerns About Gangs and Drug Sales



In fact, the trend lines track each other very closely. Concerns about drug sales showed a 14 percentage-point improvement over 2007, while concerns about gangs showed a 15 percentage-point improvement over the same time period. This means that concerns about these two crime concerns has come down dramatically since the spike of 2007. Concerns about drug sales are now generally at the average for years before 2007, while concerns about gangs are now generally much higher than for years before 2007.

Next, Figure 4-4 provides trend lines for the two years in which the questions about guns and less serious property crime were asked. The score for less serious property crime declined by 3 percentage points, following the trend for burglaries during the same time period. Concerns about guns declined by 6 percentage points; in a pattern more similar to drug sales, violent crime, and gangs for those two years.¹⁷

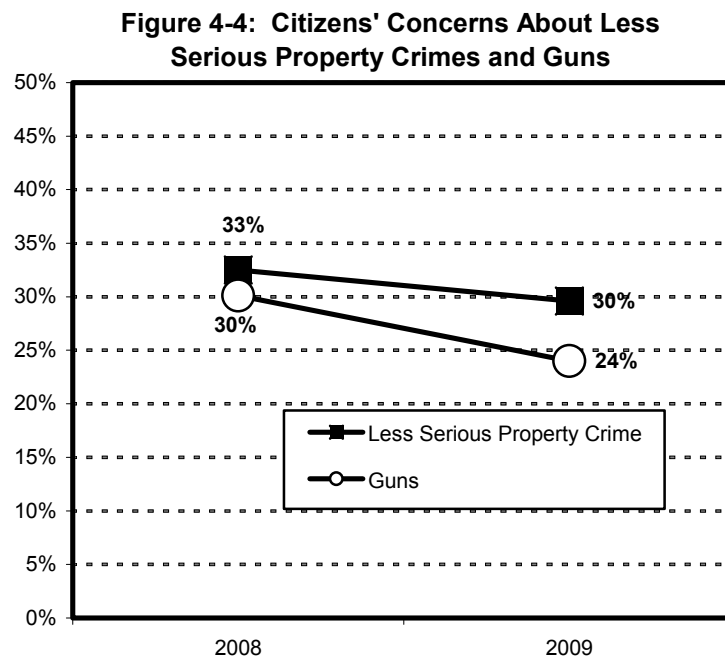
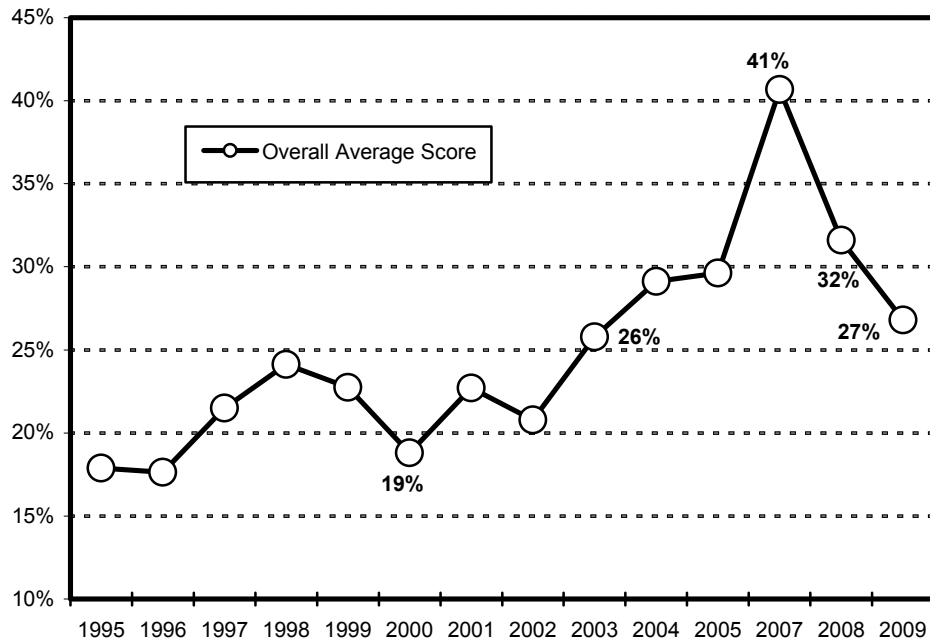


Figure 4-5 combines the six specific indicators (burglaries, less serious property crime, drug sales, guns, gangs, and violent crime) into an index. An index provides a summary measure of the data, which can be examined over time. Figure 4-5 shows the numerical average over the years.¹⁸

¹⁷ These are to be expected somewhat since burglaries and property crimes are grouped, and guns can be grouped with drugs, violent crime, and gangs.

¹⁸ The data for the two new measures, guns and less serious property crimes, were added to the index for 2008 and 2009 and did not have an appreciable effect on the results.

Figure 4-5: Average Scores for Citizens' Concerns About Specific Crime Categories



As with the previous charts for specific crimes, the data show a “spike” in crime concerns in 2007, followed by a decline of 14 percentage points between 2007 and 2009. Overall, the pattern from 2003 to the present shows higher levels of concern than the pattern from the earlier period of 1995 to 2002.

Figure 4-6: Percent of Citizens with Crime Concerns

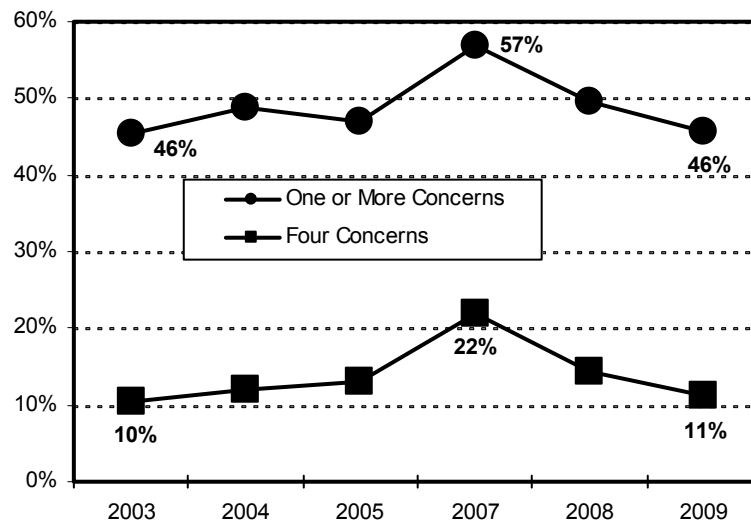


Figure 4-6 shows another way of examining the decline from the spike of 2007. It demonstrates the citizens declining concerns about four specific crime categories (burglaries, drug sales, gangs, and violent crime) in their neighborhoods.

Citizens with at least one or more concerns about crime declined from 57 percent to 46 percent, an 11 percentage-point improvement from 2007 to 2009. The Poll also identified citizens whose neighborhoods appeared to be plagued by crime—they had concerns about all four crime categories (burglaries, drug sales, gangs, and violent crime).¹⁹ Figure 4-6 shows that the level of concerns about the four categories also improved by 11 percentage points from 2007 to 2009.

Overall Assessment

The Memphis Poll examined a more general perception of crime in the citizens' neighborhoods. Specifically, the Poll asked Memphis citizens whether they thought crime rates in their neighborhoods were increasing, decreasing, or staying the same. The question specifically limited the answer to the past year and to the citizens' neighborhoods. The question referred to crime generally, rather than specific crime categories.²⁰

Figure 4-7: Citizens' Perceptions of the Rate of Increasing Crime in their Neighborhoods

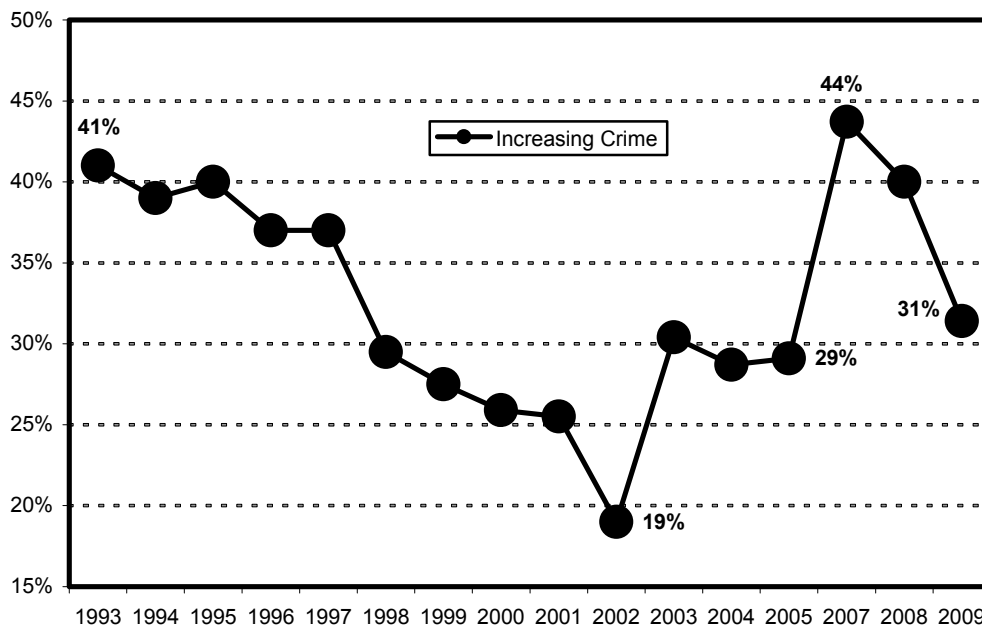


Figure 4-7 shows that 31 percent of the citizens perceived crime as increasing in their neighborhoods in 2008. This finding was a 13 percentage-point improvement from the spike of 2007. The 2009 findings are in the midpoint of

¹⁹ The data for guns and less serious property crime are excluded from this analysis because only two years of data are available for these categories.

²⁰ The response rate for this question about increasing crime was 98 percent.

the trend line from 1993 to 2009. However, the overall trend line is still problematic compared to 2002, when only 19 percent of the citizens thought crime was increasing.

Sections of the City

The Poll examined the crime results by area of the City to identify sections that may have experienced an increase or decrease in crime-related concerns over the previous year.

In order to understand the complete picture of reduced crime, Figure 4-8 provides data for the period from 2007 to 2009. These data show a dynamic result in all sections of the City in the two-year period.

Figure 4-8 is impressive in that every area of the City showed improvements in citizens' perceptions of crime in 2009 compared to 2008. Midtown had the largest improvement, with a 25 percentage point decline in crime concerns, while Northwest and Northside had the next highest improvements. In contrast, these same three areas had increasing concerns about crime in the 2007 to 2008 time period. Midtown is located in the Union Station Precinct (formerly West Precinct), while Northwest and Northside are located in the Old Allen Station Precinct (formerly called North Precinct).

When examining the larger picture of differences, only one area, Northside, had crime concerns that remained the same in 2009 as in 2007.

Figure 4-8: Change in Percentage of Respondents Reporting Increasing Crime By Section of City

Areas	Difference 2009-2008	Difference 2009-2007	Difference 2008-2007	2009	2008	2007
Midtown	-25%	-21%	4%	26.0%	50.8%	46.6%
Northwest	-17%	-7%	10%	46.0%	63.0%	53.1%
Northside	-15%	0%	15%	32.7%	48.0%	33.0%
Downtown	-12%	-14%	-2%	21.8%	34.0%	35.6%
South Central	-12%	-21%	-9%	23.6%	35.7%	44.6%
Eastside	-11%	-17%	-6%	37.8%	48.3%	54.5%
Southwest	-7%	-8%	-1%	27.5%	34.2%	35.6%
Southside	-5%	-11%	-6%	22.6%	27.7%	33.7%
Fareast	-2%	-10%	-7%	38.5%	40.8%	48.0%
Northeast	-1%	-15%	-14%	31.2%	32.0%	46.1%
Southeast	-1%	-17%	-16%	36.8%	37.3%	53.6%

Comparison to Police Data

The polling data were compared to actual police reports about crime incidents. The official reports on the police website which compared January to October 2007 and 2008 showed overall crime about the same, violent crime slightly down, and property crime about the same. The police website did not provide information about burglaries for this time period.

Key Findings

- ❑ The concerns about crime showed impressive improvements from the 2007 “spike.”
- ❑ Every section of the City was less concerned about crime when compared to 2008.
- ❑ Midtown, Northwest, and Northside had the largest improvements in crime concerns when compared to 2008.

Chapter 5

Division of Police Services

The previous chapter shows citizens' perceptions about crime in their neighborhoods. It is an assumption of this report that police can make a difference in crime rates by their policies and activities on the street. As a result, it is thought that the police bear the majority of the responsibility for positive or negative crime results.

Perceptions of the Police

The Memphis Poll asked questions about citizens' perceptions of the activities of police officers in their neighborhoods. The Poll examined citizens' perceptions of the police respectfulness, promptness, crime prevention, and performance.²¹

Respectfulness is a very important question in the Memphis Poll because of police-community relations. This is often referred to as police legitimacy, which is required if the community is to work closely with the department. Citizens rated police most favorably on respectfulness. This question asked respondents about personal treatment of citizens by officers in their own neighborhoods and not in the City as a whole. Figure 5-1 shows that 89 percent of respondents agreed that the police were respectful.

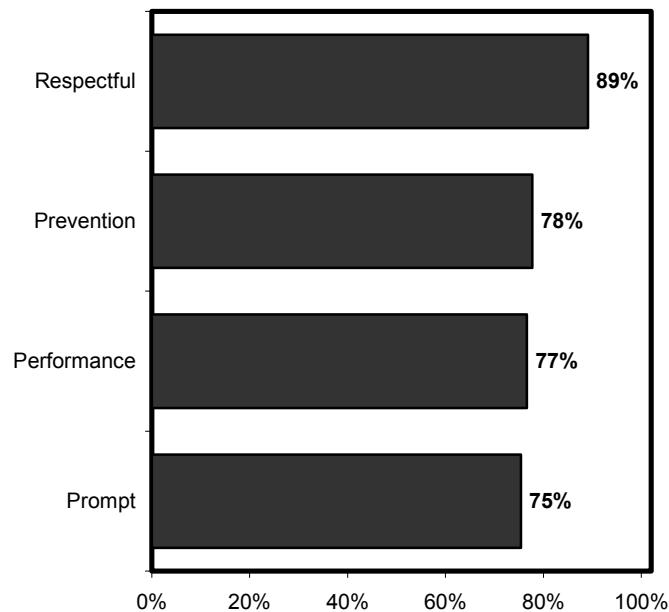
The Poll also asked how effectively the police prevented crime.²² Figure 5-1 shows that 78 percent of the citizens agreed that the police were doing a good job in the prevention of crime.

²¹ The response rates for these questions were: respectfulness (94 percent), prevention (94 percent), performance (28 percent of the sample group eligible to answer the question with 100 percent of the group responding), and promptness (92 percent). The lower response rate for performance reflects that only those citizens who made a call for service were asked this question.

²² An influential study showed that neighborhoods could reduce both crime and physical disorder through "collective efficacy." Collective efficacy means that neighbors take responsibility for preventing crime through social ties, awareness, and intervention in cases of crime and disorder. A former Memphian, Felton Earls, has been identified with these research findings in the local media and by the police. See Robert Sampson, Stephen Raudenbush, and Felton Earls, "Neighborhood and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy," *Science*, volume 277, August 15, 1997, pp. 918-924; Robert Sampson and Stephen Raudenbush, *Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods—Does it Lead to Crime?* Washington DC: National Institute of Justice, February 2001; and "Encouraging news from the crime front," Memphis Commercial Appeal, January 11, 2004.

The Poll also explored how citizens perceived police performance during calls for service. Figure 5-1 shows that 77 percent of the citizens agreed that overall police performance was good during calls for service. This question is one of the most important in the entire Poll since it only reflects the responses of the citizens who had contact with the police during calls for service.

Figure 5-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Division of Police Services



The next question examined the issue of response time and promptness by obtaining citizens' perceptions of how quickly police answered calls in their neighborhood. Figure 5-1 shows that 75 percent of the respondents agreed that the police were prompt.

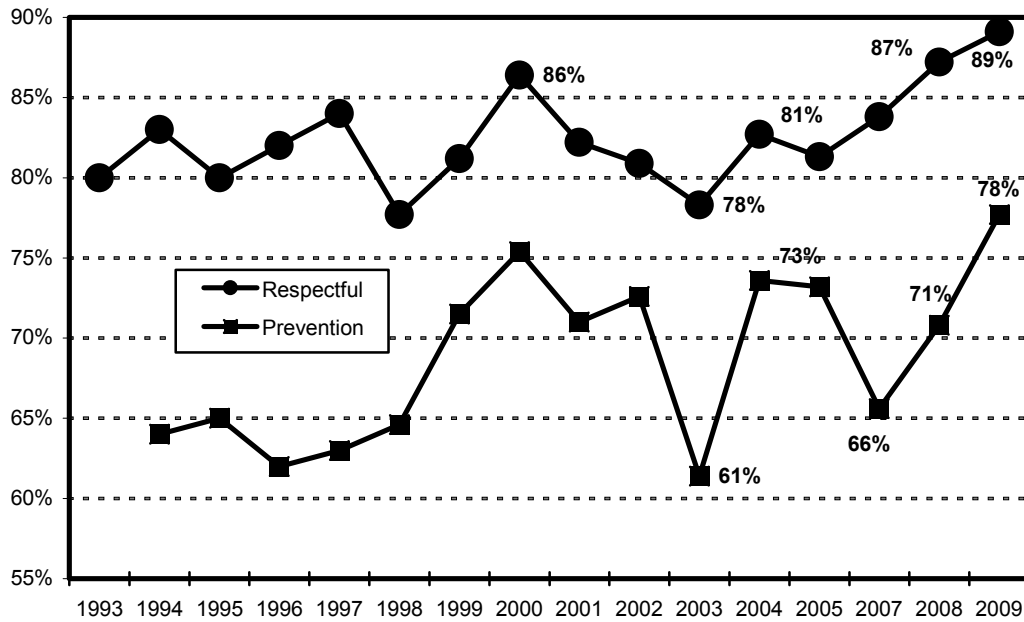
Historical Trends

The Memphis Poll has examined changes in the four measures of police services over many years. These trends provide the basis for comparing how services are viewed from one year to the next. For instance, an upward sloping trend line would indicate improvement in citizens' perceptions, whereas a downward slope would indicate a decline in the citizens' ratings. Figure 5-2 shows the trends for respectfulness and prevention, while Figure 5-3 shows the trends for performance and promptness.

The trends for respectfulness are impressive. Figure 5-2 shows that, in the 2009 Poll, 89 percent of the citizens thought the police were respectful in their neighborhoods, which is the highest since the inception of the Poll. The current

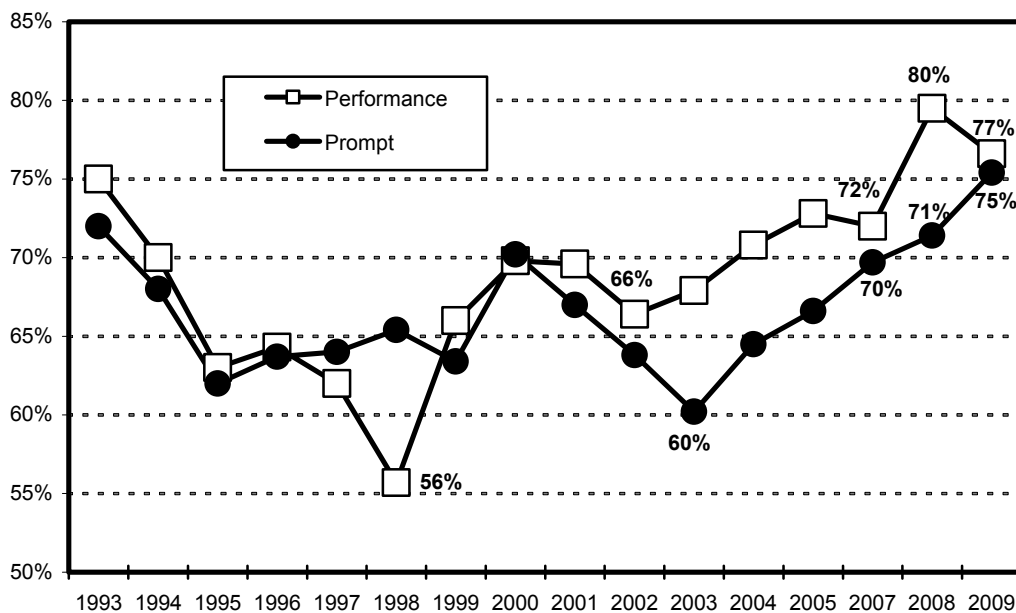
trend began in 2003 when the measure reached its lowest point at 78 percent. After that year, there has been an overall yearly improvement in the citizens' perceptions of police respectfulness.

**Figure 5-2: Citizens' Perceptions of Police Services
Respectfulness and Prevention**



The results for prevention were also positive, especially when compared to 2007. Figure 5-2 shows that citizens rated police prevention 12 percentage points higher than in 2007 and the highest in the fifteen year history of the question.

Figure 5-3: Citizens' Perceptions of Police Services Performance and Promptness



Police performance reflects citizens' perceptions of the quality of the officers' work when they responded to calls for service. As mentioned previously, only those citizens who contacted the police for services were asked this question. The trend results in Figure 5-3 are positive. The ratings for performance improved substantially from 66 percent in 2002 to 80 percent in 2008. Although the citizens' rating declined somewhat in 2009, it was the second highest score for this measure since the origination of the Poll in 1993.

Figure 5-3 also provides information about citizens' ratings for police promptness. The ratings for promptness increased 4 percentage points from 2008. However, the long-term trend is even more positive. In 2003, only 60 percent of the citizens thought the police were prompt, but that rating has improved 15 percentage points in the last five years.

Blue Crush

Blue Crush is the police strategy for dealing with high crime areas called "hot spots" to target police resources. They do saturation patrols, work under cover, and investigate high-risk offenders in these areas.

This approach is important to the police that are "on message" in communicating the use and importance of Blue Crush. The Memphis Poll worked with the police to devise several questions to determine the citizens' awareness and perceptions of Blue Crush.

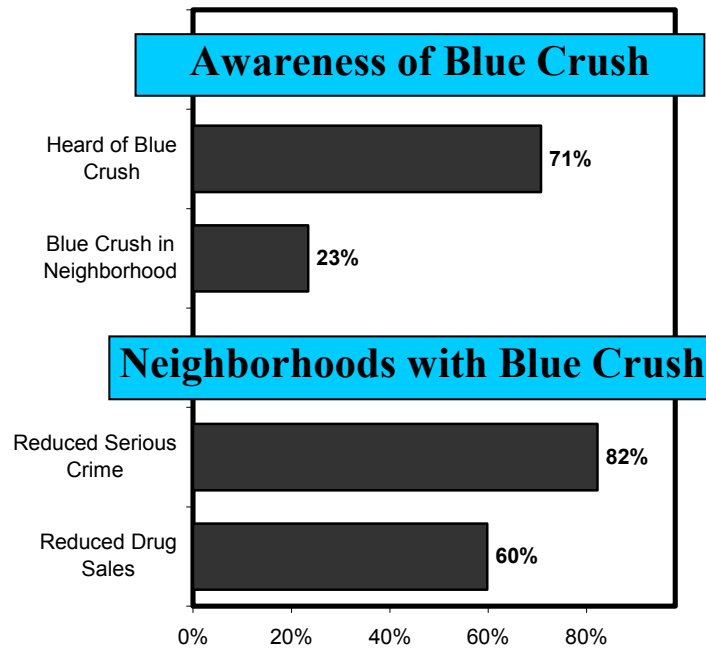
The work of Blue Crush is most visible when the Director of Police Services and other public officials hold press conference at the site of drug houses closed through nuisance abatement efforts.

Figure 5-4 shows the findings for Blue Crush. Citizens were very aware of Blue Crush with 71 percent having heard of it.²³ Next, the Poll found that 23 percent of the citizens were aware of Blue Crush operating in their neighborhoods. This is an appropriate result since Blue Crush only operates in a select number of neighborhoods.²⁴

²³ The response rate for this question about Blue Crush was 100 percent.

²⁴ The response rate for asking about Blue Crush in the neighborhood was 100 percent. African Americans were more aware of Blue Crush in their neighborhoods than whites were.

Figure 5-4: Citizens' Awareness and Rating of Blue Crush



The Memphis Poll then asked the citizens who were aware of Blue Crush in their neighborhoods what they thought of its impact.²⁵ The results were impressive. The Poll found that 82 percent of the citizens thought Blue Crush had reduced serious crime and 60 percent felt it had reduced drug sales.

Figure 5-5: Citizens' Rating of Blue Crush in Their Neighborhoods for 2009 and 2008

Blue Crush in Neighborhood	2009	2008
Reduced Drug Sales	60%	51%
Reduced Serious Crime	82%	74%

Figure 5-5 indicates a 9 percentage-point improvement for drug sales and an 8 percentage-point improvement for serious crime when comparing 2009 to 2008.

Race and the Police

The Poll calculated the differences in the scores for each of the four indicators of respectfulness, prevention, performance, and promptness between African

²⁵ There were 214 citizens that were aware of Blue Crush in their neighborhoods. The response rates for these questions on reducing serious crime and drug sales were virtually 100 percent. African Americans thought the police did a better job of reducing drug sales than whites did. However, many fewer whites responded to this question about drug sales because it was not applicable.

Americans and whites. Those four values were then averaged to show the difference between African Americans and whites.

Figure 5-6: Police Services Average Difference for African Americans & Whites

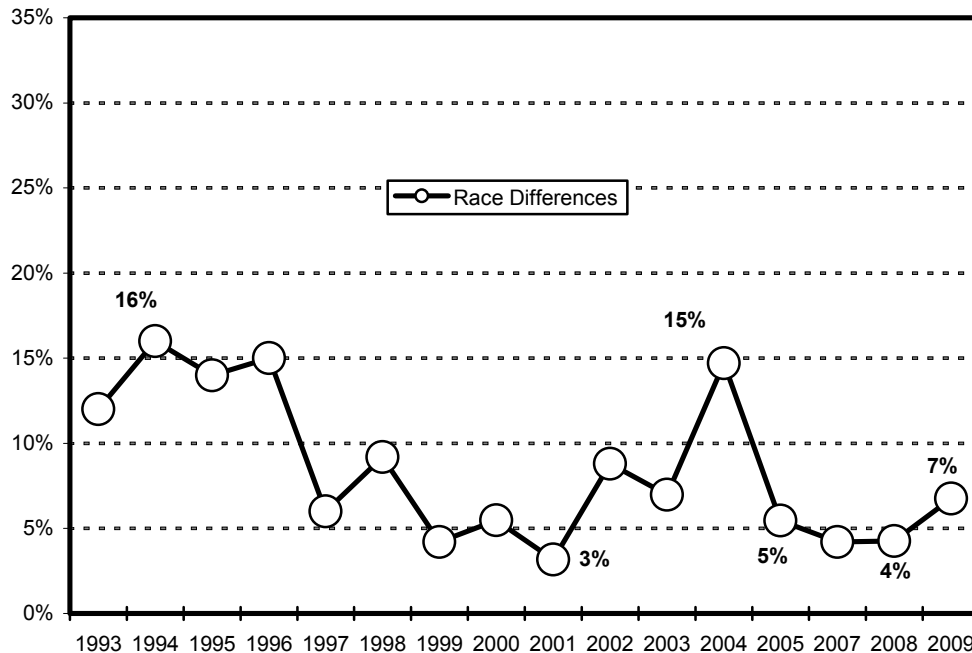


Figure 5-6 shows that the average difference in 2009 between African Americans and whites on the police indicators was 7 percent, 3 percentage-points higher than in 2008. However, the difference between African Americans and whites is positive when viewed in the longer term trend.²⁶ None of the individual indicators of respectfulness, prevention, performance and promptness met the threshold of a ten percent difference between whites and African Americans' ratings of the police.

Speeding on Neighborhood Streets

The Memphis Poll has examined citizens' concerns about speeding on streets in their neighborhoods since the first Poll in 1993. Speeding on neighborhood streets can produce dangerous conditions.

The police, along with the Division of Engineering (discussed in Chapter 15), has a responsibility for reducing speeding through enforcement strategies. In addition, Chapter 15 will address speeding by areas of the City.

²⁶ The findings are more positive as the data are closer to zero and less positive as the data are higher. As an example, 6 percent is considerably more positive than 15 percent.

Figure 5-7: Citizens' Perceptions of Speeding on Neighborhood Streets as a Problem

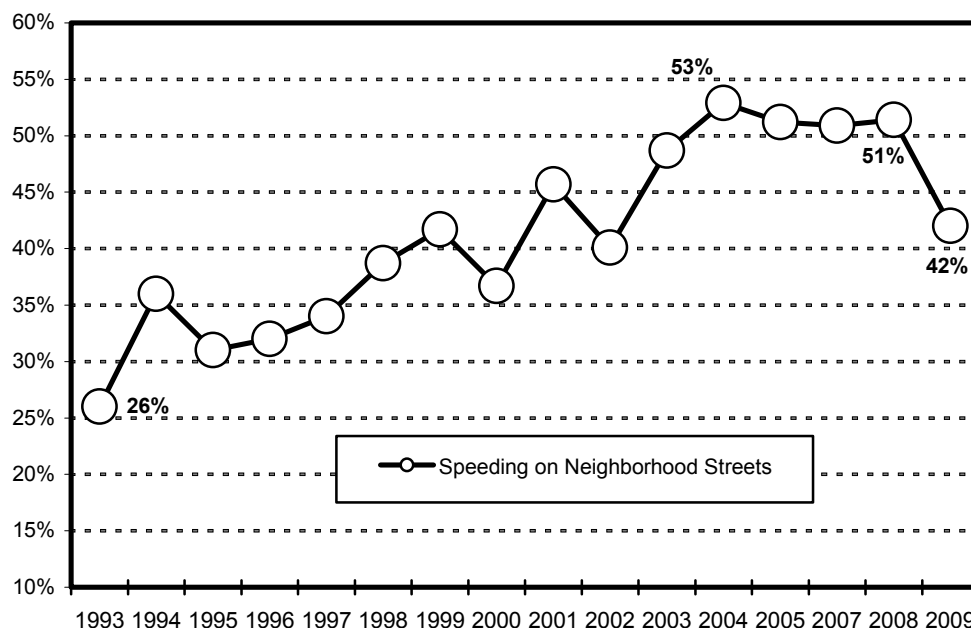


Figure 5-7 shows increasing levels of concern about speeding on neighborhood streets from the first year of the Memphis Poll.²⁷ The figure shows that 26 percent of the citizens were concerned about speeding in 1993 and that percentage has consistently increased over the years of the Memphis Poll to 51 percent in 2008.

The Memphis Poll found that concerns about speeding declined sharply by 9 percentage points from 2008 to 2009.

The sharp decline could possibly be due to enforcement, but that is doubtful. It is also not likely due to traffic engineering—for example, the speed bump program is in abeyance and there do not appear to be other broad-based strategies for reducing speeding.

Rather, the cause appears to be a decline in vehicle miles traveled. Because of the cost of gas in 2008, citizens are traveling fewer miles in vehicles and perhaps, at lower speeds, to conserve gas.²⁸

²⁷ The response rate for this question about speeding was 100 percent.

²⁸ Tom Held, "Fatalities on state highways decrease, following nation trend," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, January 1, 2009.

Emergency Calls to 911

At the request of the Division of Police Services, the Memphis Poll asked questions about the effectiveness of the 911 operators in dealing with emergency calls with regards to police issues. Only citizens that used 911 for police emergencies were asked to respond to the following questions.²⁹

Figure 5-8: Citizens' Perceptions of Contacting 911 for Police Emergency

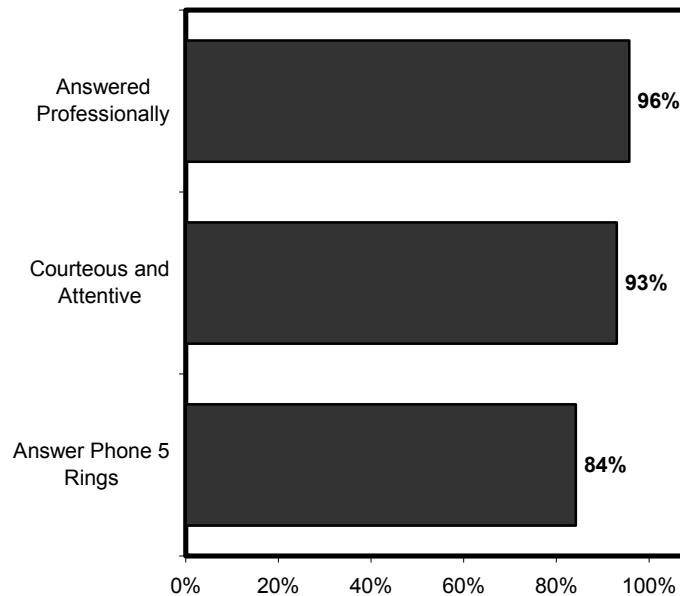


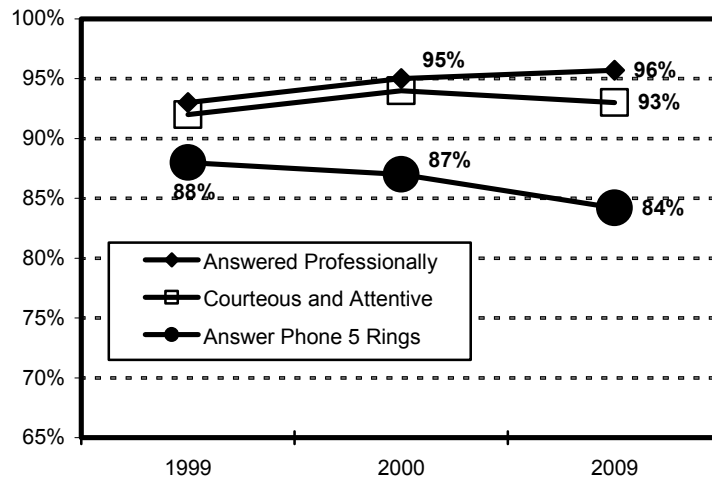
Figure 5-8 shows that citizens rated two of the indicators among the elite of City services. Ninety-six (96) percent of the citizens thought the operators answered the phone professionally and 93 percent thought the operators were courteous and attentive. When asked if the phones were answered in five rings, a measure of response time, 84 percent of the citizens were satisfied. The score for answering the phone within five rings was above the 80 percent average score for City services.

The Memphis Poll previously studied emergency calls in 1999 and 2000. Figure 5-9 shows that the ratings for answering the phone professionally, and being courteous and attentive were equally high in all of the three years. Answering the phone within five rings declined slightly from the earlier time period, but still remained above the average score for City services.

²⁹ Sixteen (16) percent responded that they had called 911 for a police emergency. The response rates for the individual questions were 99 percent for answered phone professionally and courteous & attentive. The response rate for answered the phone in 5 rings was 93 percent.

An overall assessment of these findings suggests that the 911 program involving police emergency calls is doing an effective job. However, the division may want to examine whether it makes sense to improve the time period in which the phone is answered.³⁰

Figure 5-9: Citizens' Perceptions of Contacting 911 for Police Emergencies



Key Findings

- ❑ The 2009 Memphis Poll found that citizens saw significant improvements in police services over time.
- ❑ Citizens were aware of Blue Crush and they thought it had an impact on reducing crime and drugs sales in their neighborhoods.
- ❑ Overall, citizens were satisfied with the 911 program for police emergency calls.

³⁰ There is not a clear policy recommendation about answering the phone more quickly. One response is that answering the phone more quickly at busy times will not produce a quicker response in the field by officers. The other side of this issue is that citizens are stressed by waiting for an operator to answer, and that more operators would both alleviate the stress and would identify the most serious calls more quickly.

Chapter 6

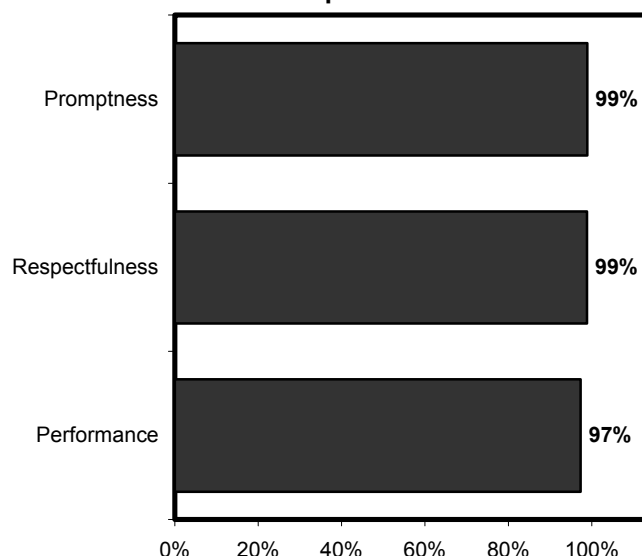
Division of Fire Services

The Division of Fire Services includes both a fire-fighting component and an ambulance/emergency-services component, which are respectively called the fire department and EMS in this report.

The Fire Department

The Poll asked citizens about their perceptions of the fire department. The results are illustrated in Figure 6-1. Each of the three service measures – promptness, respectfulness, and performance – were among the highest scores in the entire Memphis Poll.³¹

Figure 6-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Fire Department



Citizens were asked if the fire department was prompt in answering calls in their neighborhoods. This question examined the issue of response time by obtaining citizens' perceptions of how quickly the fire department crews arrived at their destination. Figure 6-1 shows 99 percent of the citizens agreed that the fire department was prompt.

³¹ The response rates for these questions were: promptness (91 percent), respectfulness (93 percent), and performance (12 percent of the sample group eligible to answer the question with 100 percent of the group responding). The lower response rate for performance reflects that only those citizens who made a call for service were asked this question.

The Poll also asked citizens if they agreed that fire department crews were respectful to people in their neighborhoods. This statement attempted to gauge the treatment of citizens by fire department personnel working in the field. Ninety-nine (99) percent of the citizens felt that the fire department's crews were respectful.

The Poll then examined how citizens perceived the performance of the fire department during a call or contact for service. Only citizens who contacted the fire department were asked to answer this question. Ninety-seven (97) percent of the citizens were satisfied with the fire department's performance.

Figure 6-2: Overall Trend for Fire Department

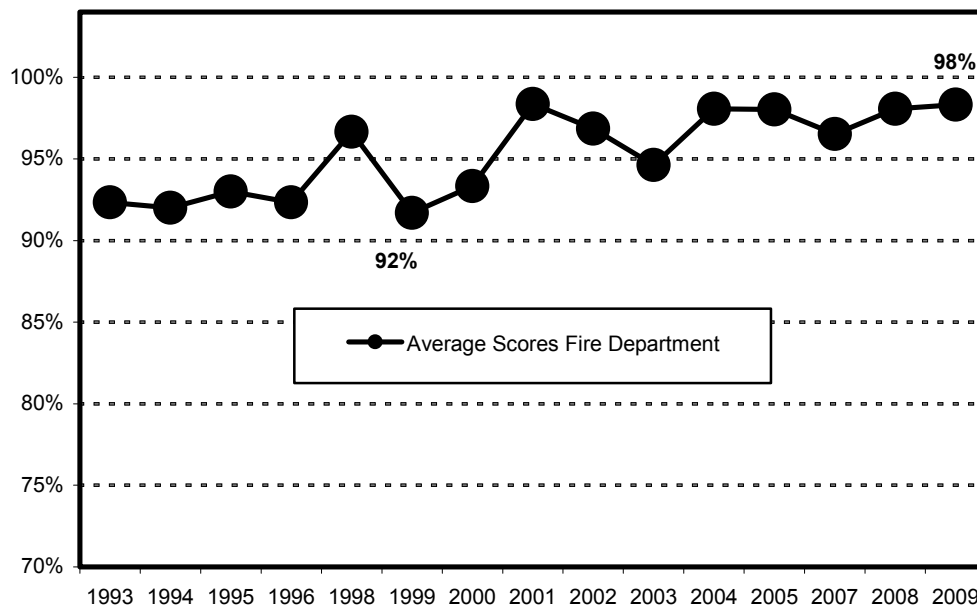


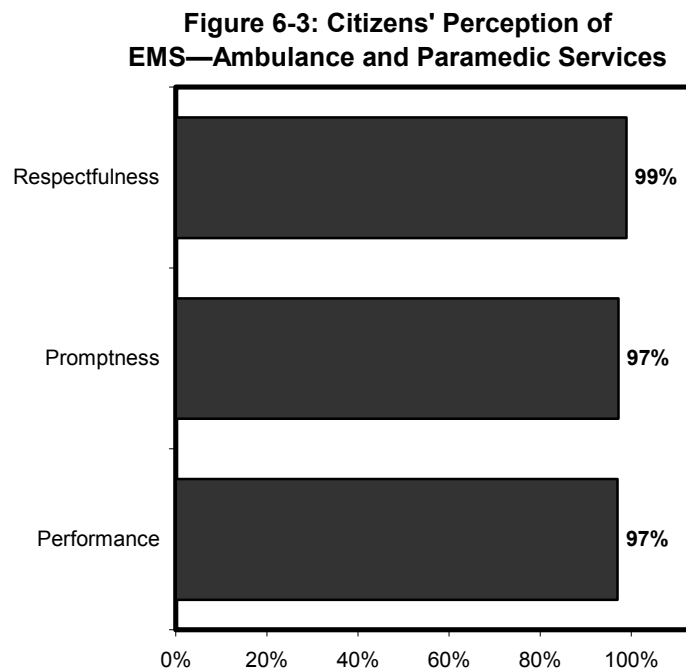
Figure 6-2 provides the overall trend data for the fire department when the three measures are averaged. The average score for the three measures was 98 percent in the 2009 Memphis Poll, an impressive result. Also, Figure 6-2 shows that the fire department's ratings have been above 90 percent during all of the years of the Memphis Poll. The department has been above 95 percent since 2001. These are remarkable findings that reflect an elite City division.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Figure 6-3 presents the results for emergency services, also called EMS.³² Citizens were asked if they agreed that EMS crews were respectful to people in

³² The response rates for these questions were: respectfulness (87 percent), promptness (86 percent), and performance (18 percent of the sample group eligible to answer the question with 99 percent of the group

their neighborhood. A very high 99 percent of the citizens felt that EMS crews were respectful.³³



The Poll next asked citizens if the EMS crews were prompt in answering calls in their neighborhoods. Ninety-seven (97) percent of the citizens were satisfied with the EMS crews' promptness.

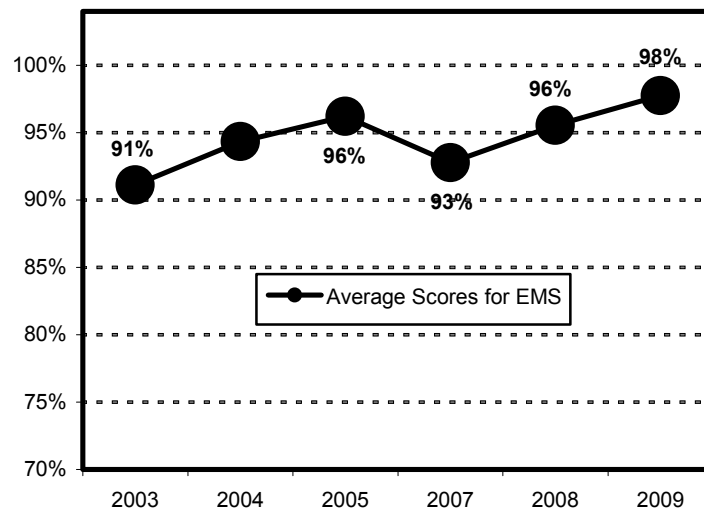
The Poll also examined how citizens perceived the performance of the EMS during a call or contact for service. Figure 6-3 shows that 97 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the EMS performance. This result is a 9 percentage-point improvement over 2007, when 88 percent of citizens were satisfied with the EMS performance.

Next, the Memphis Poll examined the five years of trend data available for EMS. Figure 6-4 shows that the averages of the three indicators have improved over the years, with the highest score of 98 percent in 2009 compared to 91 percent in 2003. These findings indicate that citizens considered EMS one of the strongest services provided by the City of Memphis.

responding). The lower response rate for performance reflects that only those citizens who made a call for service were asked this question.

³³ Prior to 2003, the Memphis Poll combined the calls for the fire department with emergency services to obtain a single score for both of the services. Starting in 2003, separate questions were asked about the City ambulance and paramedic services, called EMS.

**Figure 6-4: Overall Trend for EMS—
Ambulance and Paramedic Services**



Key Findings

- ❑ The Division of Fire Services was the highest-rated division of City government.
- ❑ Both the fire department and EMS ambulance & paramedic services were highly rated by the citizens.

Chapter 7

Division of Park Services

This chapter describes citizens' perceptions of programs delivered by the Division of Park Services. It includes a discussion of both recreation programs (such as community centers) and public learning facilities (such as the Pink Palace Museum).

Figure 7-1 provides the response rates for each of the services. Citizens were asked to respond only when they were familiar with a specific service. Therefore, a low response rate was appropriate for some services. For example, 87 percent of the citizens responded to the question about large parks, while 37 percent responded to the question about public tennis courts.

Figure 7-1: Percent Responding to Questions on Quality of Park Services

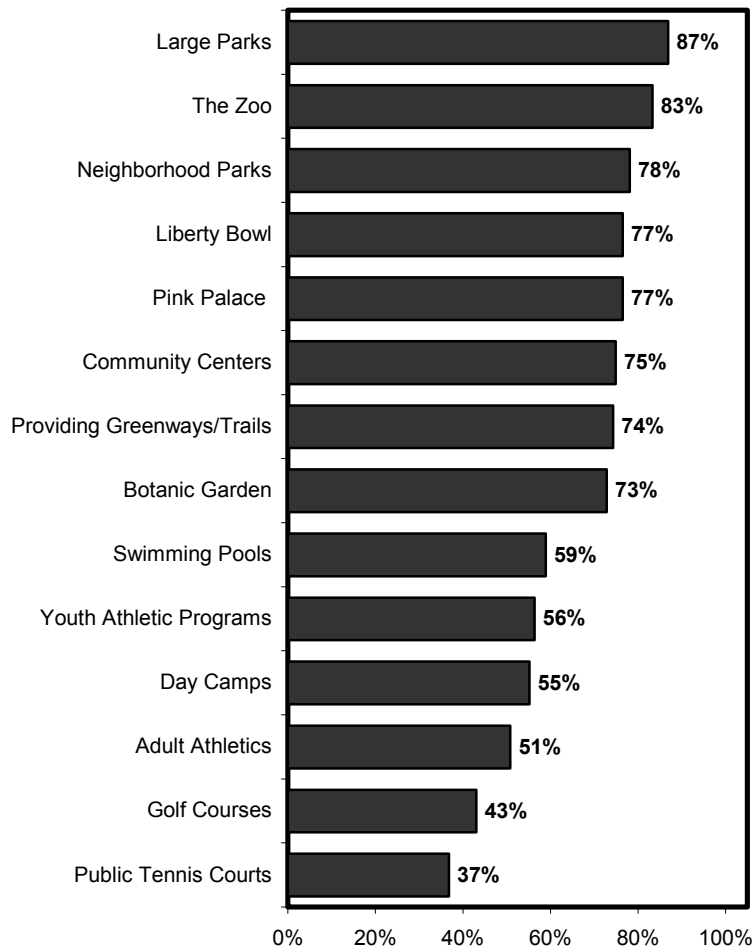
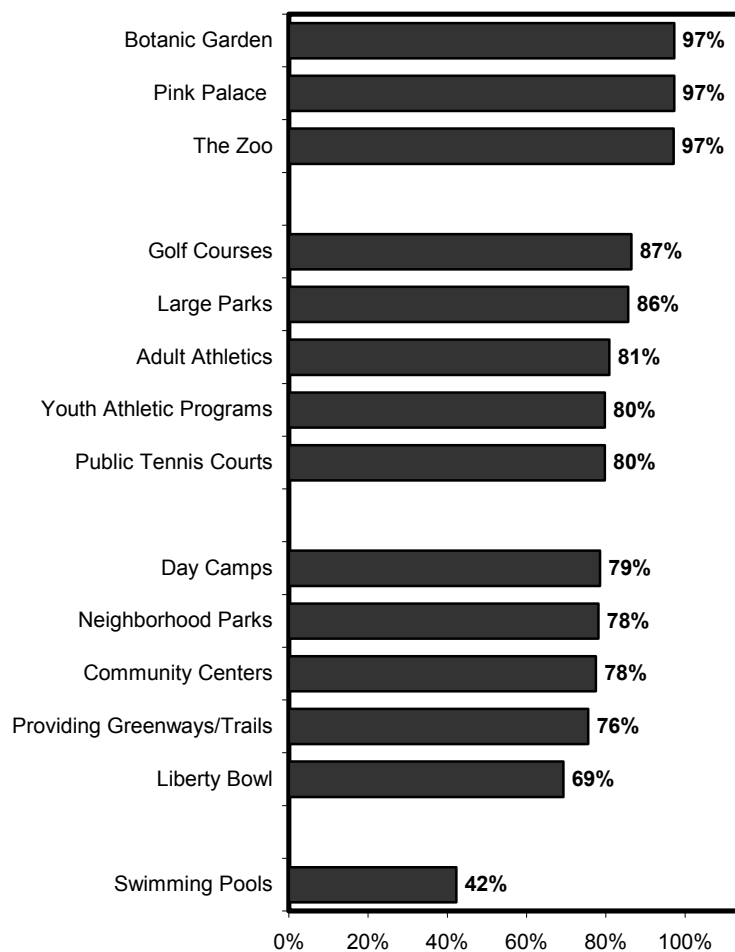


Figure 7-2 shows the percentage of citizens expressing positive views of specific park services. The results in this chapter should be carefully compared to Chapter 3, which discussed how citizens prioritized park services when compared to other City services. In addition, the specific ratings for Park Services' programs should be compared to the overall approval rating for City services, which was 80 percent.

The Division of Park Services administers many different programs. There were some variations in citizens' perceptions about the quality of its services. Figure 7-2 divides the services contextually by examining the clustering of services.

Figure 7-2: Citizens' Perceptions of Quality of Park Services



Tier 1—Exceptional Services: Citizens were most satisfied with three programs: Botanic Garden, Pink Palace Museum, and the Zoo. Figure 7-2 shows that 97 percent of the citizens expressed positive views of these programs ranking them among the highest of all City services.

Tier 2—Effective Services: Services were categorized as effective if their scores were at or exceeded the overall average of 80 percent for City services. These services included golf courses (87 percent), large parks (86 percent), adult athletics (81 percent), youth athletic programs (80 percent), and public tennis courts (80 percent).

Tier 3—Slightly Below Average Services: These services had scores that ranged between 69 and 79 percent. The services in this category were just below the overall 80 percent approval rating for City services. Respectable services included summer day camps (79 percent), neighborhood parks (78 percent), community centers (78 percent), providing greenways & trails (76 percent), and Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium (69 percent).

African Americans were less satisfied with adult athletics and youth athletic programs than whites were.

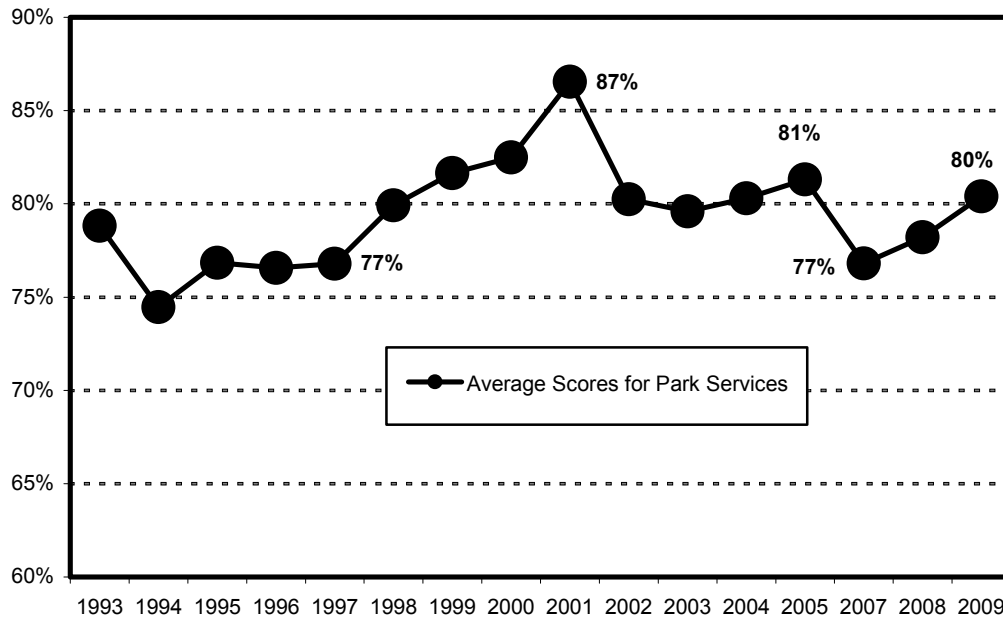
Tier 4—Marginal Service: A marginal service was among the weakest in the entire Memphis Poll and it should receive special scrutiny for that reason alone. Figure 7-2 shows that only 42 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the public swimming pools.

Trend Data

The Memphis Poll combined all of the services to obtain an average rating for the Division of Park Services. Figure 7-3 shows that the rating of 80 percent in 2009 was 3 percentage points higher than in 2007. This rating was equal to the overall average for all City services.

However, these results need to be considered within the context of earlier trends. From 1997 to 2001, the ratings for Park Services improved incrementally. These small annual improvements led to a 10 percentage-point increase over the five years to a high of 87 percent. This period was followed by a decline and leveling off of the ratings at around 80 percent from 2002 to 2005, before another decline in 2007. The latest trend from 2007 to 2009 may be the beginning of a longer-term improvement.

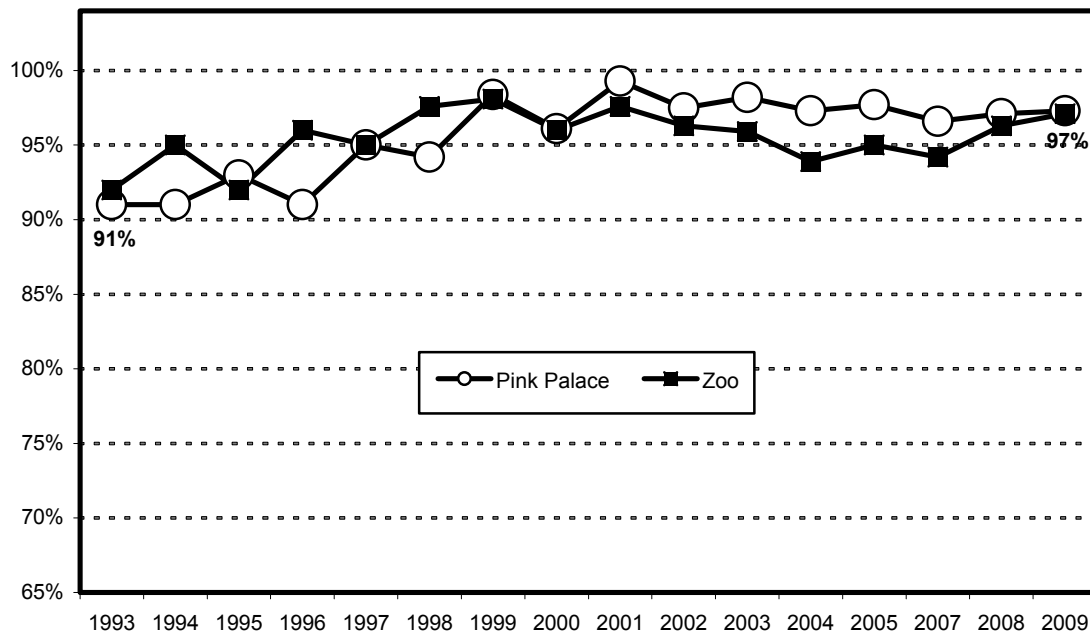
Figure 7-3: Overall Ratings for Park Services



Specific Services

This section examines trend data for the specific services provided by the Division of Park Services. Some trend data are available for the entire years of the Memphis Poll, while other trend data are available for fewer years.

Figure 7-4: Citizens' Perceptions of Pink Palace and Zoo



Services are grouped into several figures since it is difficult to clearly display a large number of trend lines in a single graph.

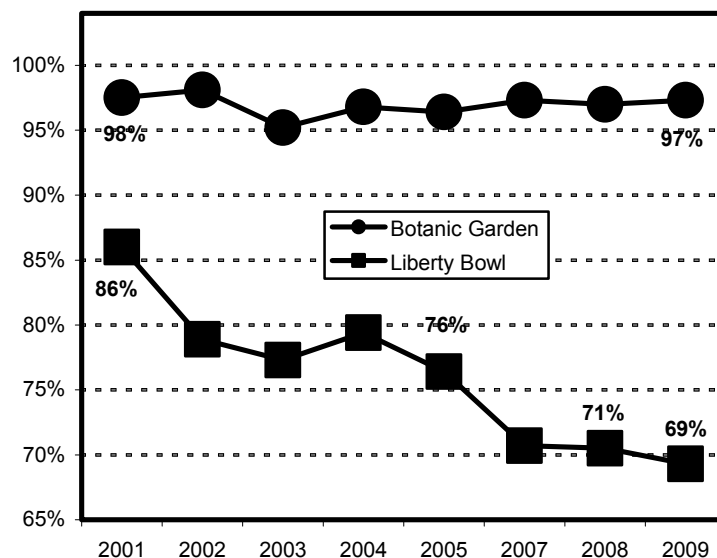
According to the citizens, the Memphis Botanic Garden, Memphis Pink Palace Museum, and Memphis Zoo are three of the most effective City services over time.

Figure 7-4 shows that the Pink Palace and the Zoo have never had a score below 90 percent in the entire years of the Memphis Poll. Additionally, in the earlier years of the Poll these services have generally shown gradual improvements and starting in 2002 leveled off at the higher rates. The results have been impressive over the term of the Poll.

Citizens also saw the Botanic Garden as an elite service. The Memphis Poll has measured citizens' perceptions of the Botanic Garden since 2001. Figure 7-5 shows that the citizens viewed the Botanic Garden as equal to the Pink Palace Museum and the Zoo. The trend data have been consistently high for the Botanic Garden, ranging from 95 to 98 percent. The result for 2009, 97 percent, is within this impressive range.

In summary, the Botanic Garden, the Pink Palace, and the Zoo are “elite” services of the City and have enjoyed impressive scores over time.

Figure 7-5: Citizens' Perceptions of Botanic Garden and Liberty Bowl



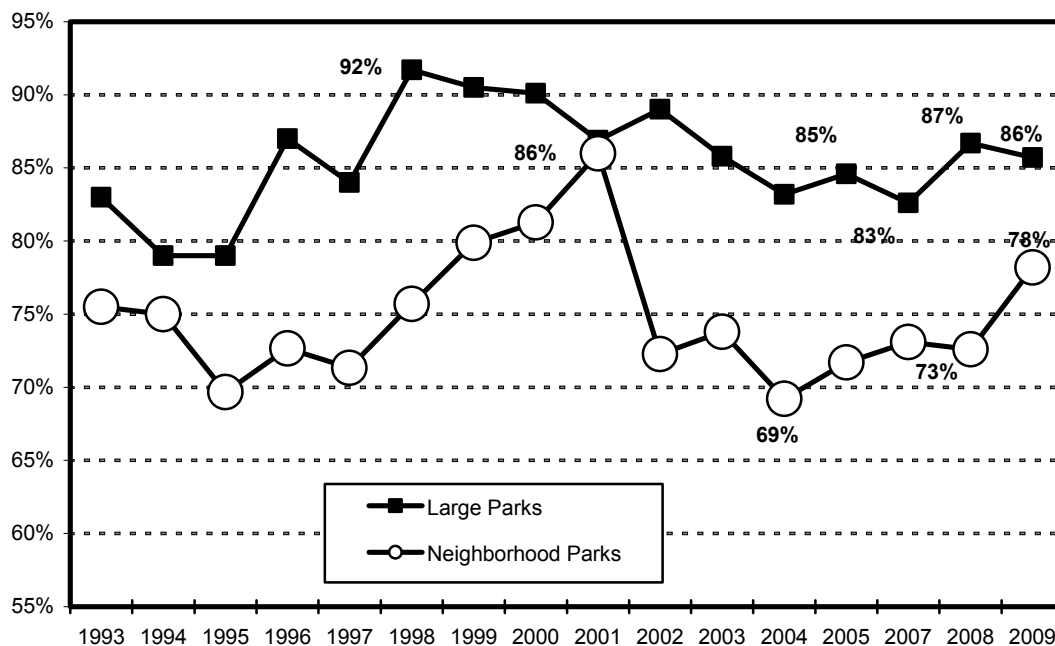
The Memphis Poll has examined the Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium since 2001. Figure 7-5 shows that perceptions of the Liberty Bowl have declined 17 percentage points since that year. However, this finding is not a concern when placed into the context of citizens' service priorities. Chapter 3 shows that support for improving large public entertainment facilities, such as the Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, were the lowest priority of any public service.

The Memphis Poll examined the “park” component of the Division of Park Services. Specifically, it asked citizens about both large parks and neighborhood parks. Both of these types of parks have been studied for the entire sixteen years of the Memphis Poll.

The division's website indicates there are seven large parks in the City. Figure 7-6 shows the rating in 2009 is an improvement of 3 percentage points over 2007 and appears to be within a consistent range for the last six years of the Memphis Poll.

There have been three distinct patterns for the large parks since the Poll began. From 1995 to 1998, the scores rose from 79 to 92 percent. From 1998 to 2007, there was a downward trend of 9 percentage points, followed by an upward swing in 2008 and remaining near that point this year.

Figure 7-6: Citizens' Perceptions of Large Parks and Neighborhood Parks

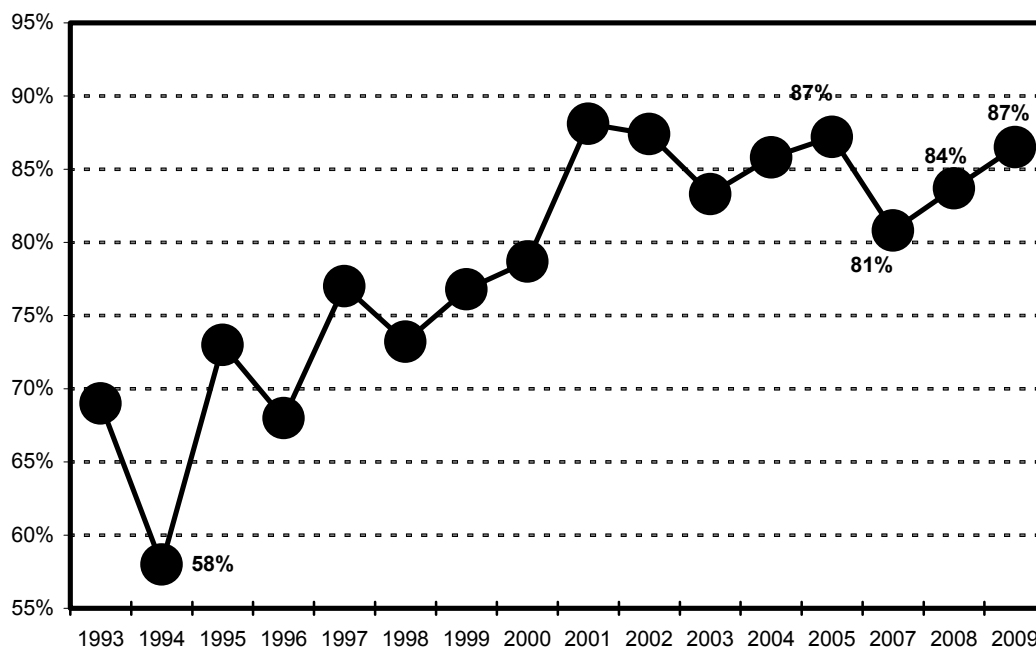


The website for park services indicates there are approximately 106 neighborhood parks administered by the division.³⁴ Figure 7-6 also provides the ratings for neighborhood parks. Citizens were more satisfied with the neighborhood parks than in previous years, with a 5 percentage-point improvement in the score from 2008 to 2009. These improved ratings are important since neighborhood parks are part of the core mission of the Division of Park Services.

As context, the citizens' ratings for neighborhood parks climbed from 70 percent in 1995 to 86 percent in 2001. There was a precipitous decline in the 2002 score. Thereafter until 2008, the ratings have been in the range of 69 to 74 percent with an increase this year.

Next the Memphis Poll examined citizens' perceptions of the quality of the City golf courses. The scores for golf course are not only well above the City average in 2009, but the long-term improvement for golf courses has been impressive. Figure 7-7 shows that the low-point for citizens' perceptions of the golf course was 58 percent in 1994, compared with 87 percent in 2009. There was a slight decline between the years of 2005 and 2007, but the results have improved to very near the highest score for this category.

Figure 7-7: Citizens' Perceptions of Golf Courses



³⁴ <http://www.cityofmemphis.org/framework.aspx?page=884>

Next, the Poll examined citizens' perceptions of greenways and walking trails. Figure 7-8 shows that for the last six years the citizens rating were in a narrow range from 75 percent to 80 percent. Since 2005, the ratings show a small decline, and the 2009 rating is slightly below the average for all City services.

Figure 7-8: Citizens' Perceptions of Walking Trails

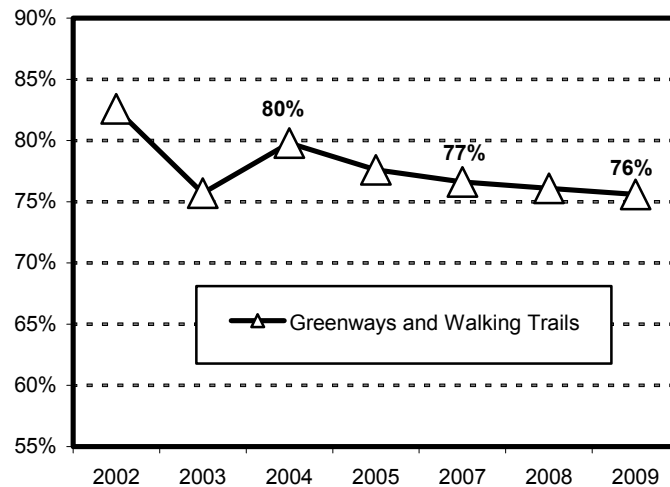
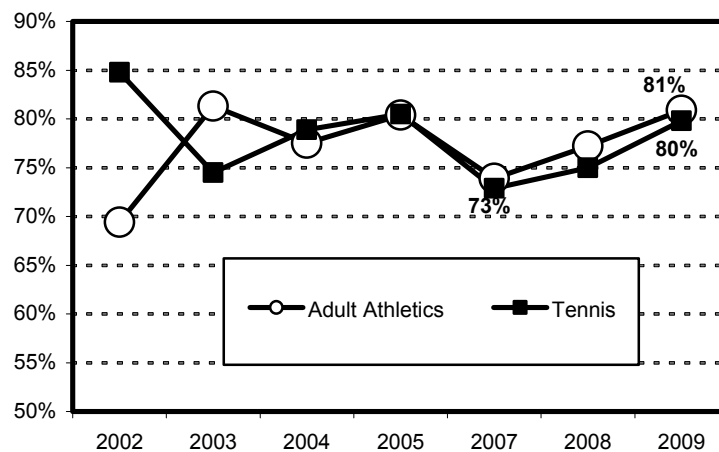


Figure 7-9 shows the perceptions of adult athletics (which include softball, basketball, and volleyball)³⁵ and tennis courts since 2002. Citizens were more satisfied with these services in 2009 when compared to 2007. Figure 7-9 shows a 7 percentage-point improvement for both services in that time period. Both of these scores were at or above the average score for City services. With the exception of tennis in 2002, the 2009 scores were the highest ratings for these services in the seven years in which these questions have been asked.

Figure 7-9: Citizens' Perceptions of Adult Athletics and Tennis Courts



³⁵ Volleyball was added to this list for the first time in 2008.

Services for Children and Youth

The Memphis Poll examined services that were targeted towards children and youth, but in some cases they also provided programs for adults and seniors.

Figure 7-10: Citizens' Perceptions of Youth Athletics and Community Centers

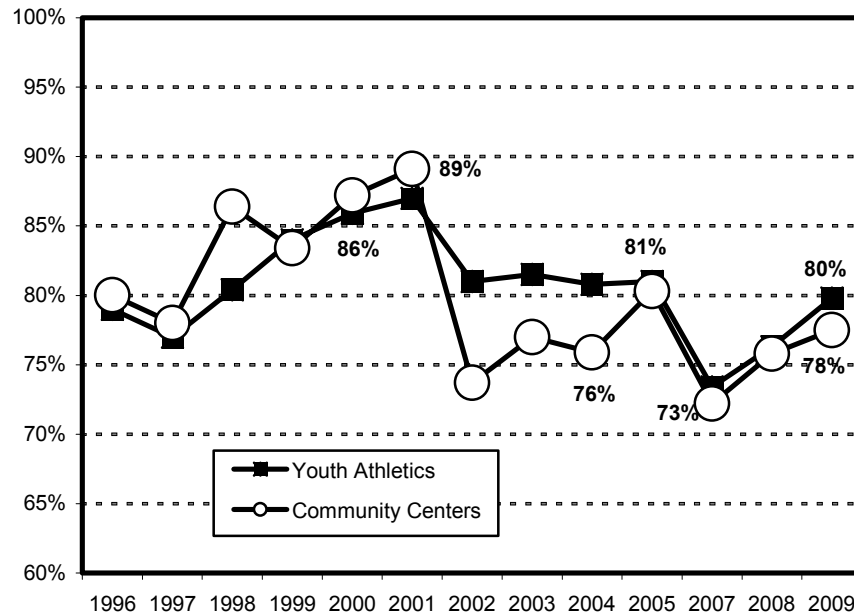
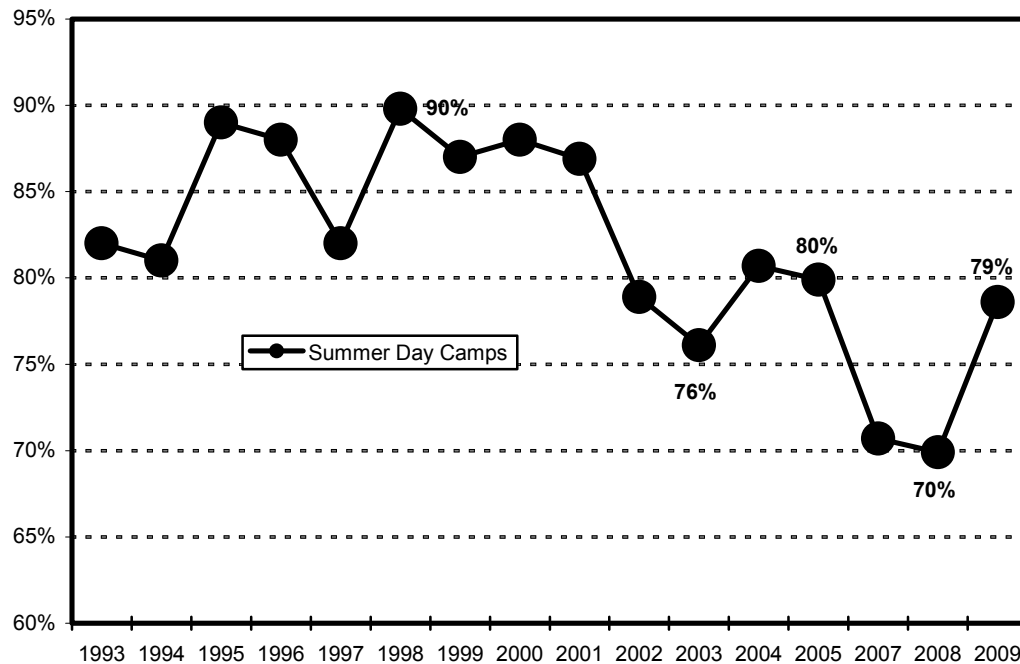


Figure 7-10 provides information for youth athletics and community centers. It shows that citizens thought those services improved from 2007 to 2009. Youth athletics showed a 7 percentage-point improvement, while the score for community centers increased by 5 percentage points over the two years.

The longer-term analysis shows overall improvement in the early years of the Poll, but in 2002 there was a pronounced drop in citizens' satisfaction with youth athletics and community centers. Ratings remained at this level (around 81 percent and 77 percent, respectively) from 2002 through 2005. Then, both of these programs had precipitous declines again in 2007—a decrease of 8 percentage points compared to 2005. However, both showed improvements in the current Poll. Even with the improvement, the score for these two services are below their high levels of 2001.

As shown in Figure 7-11, summer day camps have a slightly different pattern, but the overall results are similar. There was a 9 percentage-point improvement in the scores between 2008 and 2009.

Figure 7-11: Citizens' Perceptions of Summer Day Camps



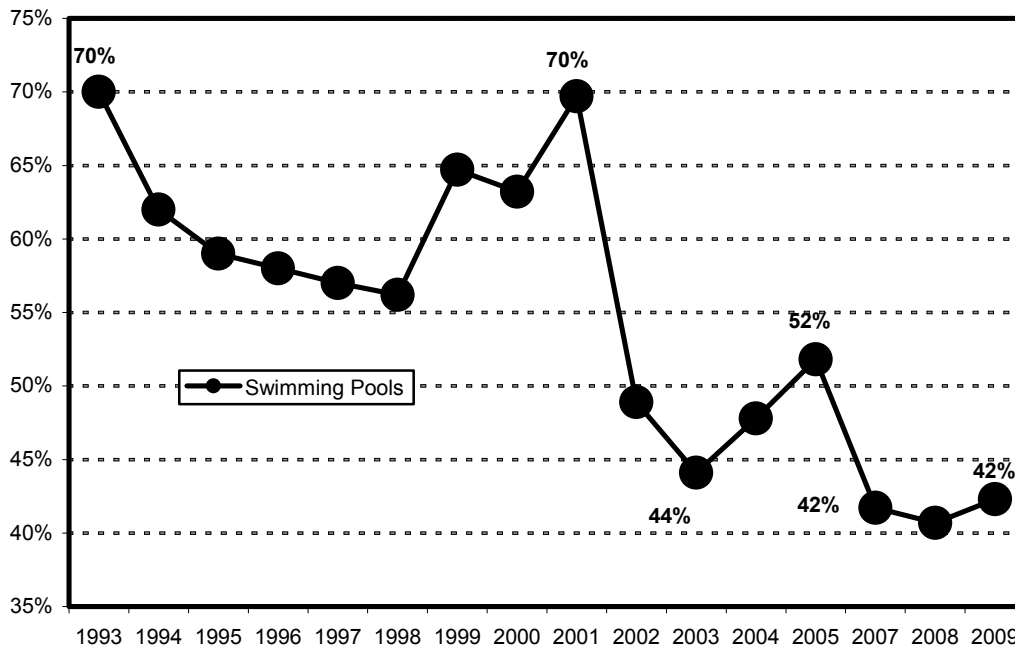
Between 1993 and 2001, citizens' ratings for summer day camps varied between 80 and 90 percent. In 2002 and 2003, the ratings fell below 80 percent for the first time, before recovering somewhat in 2004 and 2005. However, the ratings for summer day camps had a sharp decline from 80 percent in 2005 to 71 percent in 2007, a 9 percentage-point decline. The ratings in 2008 remained about the same as in 2007 with a substantial increase this year.

Public Swimming Pools

The findings about public swimming pools (called Aquatic Centers) are the most problematic for the Division of Park Services. The citizens' ratings have bottomed out at around 42 percent in the last three years of the Memphis Polls.

Long-term data shown in Figure 7-12 indicates a consistent and long-term decline in citizens' ratings from 1993 to 1998, when the ratings declined from 70 percent to 56 percent.

Figure 7-12: Citizens' Perceptions of Public Swimming Pools



During the three-year period from 1998 to 2001, there was an overall improvement from 56 percent to 70 percent. This period was followed by another sharp decline in citizen satisfaction over the next two years to 44 percent. By 2005, that number had improved to 52 percent.

However, the ratings for public swimming pools declined precipitously from 52 percent in 2005 to 42 percent in 2007. The ratings in 2009 remained the same as in 2007. As discussed in Chapter 19, the swimming pool score is the second lowest rated service out of 65 total City services assessed in the Memphis Poll. Sentence okay

In earlier years, Parks Services staff suggested the problem was related to their limited budget and that the division does not have funds to hire reliable temporary staff for the pools, which are open only for a short period of time. Staff also thought that only children who used the pools should be interviewed about the quality of the pools.³⁶

³⁶ The pools have been long-term problems, as identified by the citizens in the Memphis Poll. In 1995, the Memphis Poll surveyed users of the pools. It found that half of users thought problems were related to pool facilities such as locker rooms and bathrooms, water cleanliness, and crowding. The next factor was public safety at 40 percent. Factors that were not important: lifeguards, other staff, water temperature, and hours of operation.

Although the ratings have varied over time, pools have consistently ranked among the lowest-rated City services. It has been suggested that the Division of Park Services needs to conduct surveys on actual pool conditions during the summer using an objective third-party researcher. No such data appears to currently exist.

Key Findings

- ❑ The overall ratings for the Division of Park Services showed a noticeable improvement in 2009.
- ❑ Programs with substantial improvements in ratings were neighborhood parks, golf courses, adult athletics, public tennis courts, youth athletics, community centers, and summer day camps.
- ❑ The Botanic Garden, Pink Palace, and Zoo were once again among the elite of City services.
- ❑ The citizens rated public swimming pools as the second lowest service in the entire Poll. These ratings are considerably lower than those from the early years of the Memphis Poll.
- ❑ Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium showed a slight decline in ratings from earlier years, but as discussed in Chapter 3, it was also the citizens' lowest rated priority.

Chapter 8

Riverfront Development Corporation

The Riverfront Development Corporation (RDC) is a nonprofit agency charged with maintaining and developing the riverfront. Its main function is planning a variety of development projects on the downtown riverfront. In addition, the RDC operates Mud Island River Park. It receives considerable funding from the City of Memphis for both administrative activities and capital improvements.

Service Priorities

Chapter 3 discusses the priorities that citizens gave to various services and projects. It shows that citizens thought funding improvements on the Riverfront such as the boat landing, walkways, and sidewalk cafes, were a very low priority. Figure 3-1 in Chapter 3 shows that only 18 percent of the citizens supported these projects.

Mud Island River Park

The Poll asked citizens about their perceptions of Mud Island River Park, which is administered by the RDC. Figure 8-1 shows that 66 percent of the citizens thought the agency was doing a good job of delivering services at the park.³⁷ This was an improvement of 5 percentage points from the 2008 Memphis Poll.

However, this score is well below the City services average of 80 percent. In some ways, Mud Island River Park is similar to a large City park. The score for the large parks was 86 percent, while the score for Mud Island River Park is 20 percentage points lower at 66 percent.

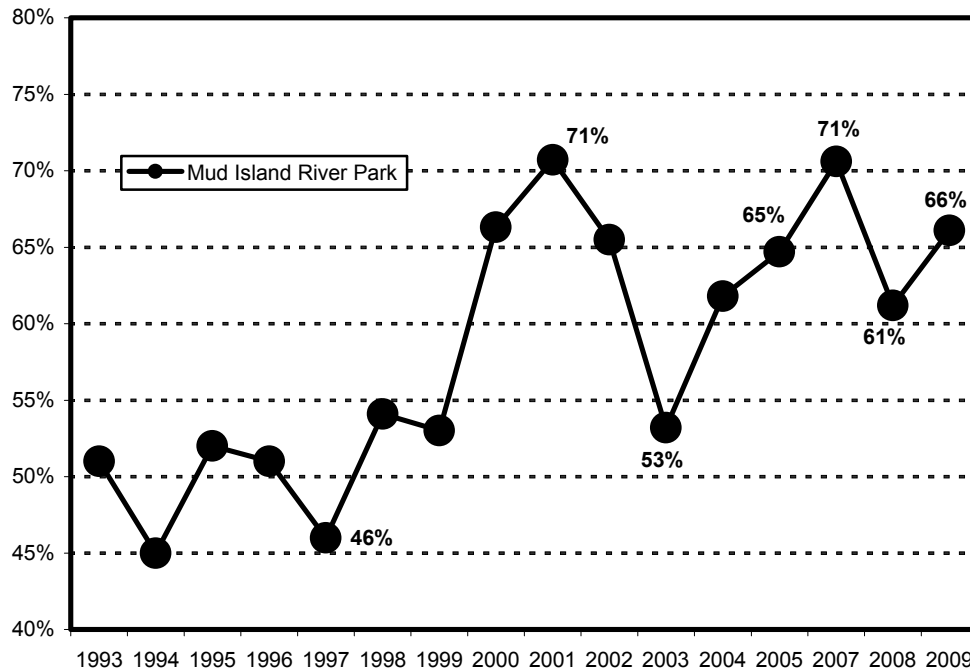
These ratings have been somewhat volatile during the history of the Memphis Poll. The Riverfront Development Corporation's administration of Mud Island River Park began after 2001.³⁸ The ratings from 2001 to 2003 showed a sharp decline from 71 percent to 53 percent during this early period of the Riverfront Development Corporation's administration of the park. By the 2007 Poll, 71 percent of the citizens again thought the Riverfront Development Corporation

³⁷ The response rate for this question about Mud Island River Park was 67 percent.

³⁸ Previously, the Department of Park Services and its predecessor, the Park Commission, managed Mud Island River Park.

was doing a good job. This was an 18 percentage-point increase in satisfaction from the 2003 Memphis Poll.

**Figure 8-1: Citizens' Perceptions of
Mud Island River Park**



Key Findings

- ❑ Citizens rated development of the riverfront among the lowest priorities for City funding.
- ❑ The ratings for Mud Island River Park showed an improvement in 2009, but this service was well below the average when compared to other City services.

Chapter 9

Neighborhood Concerns

This chapter examines citizens' perceptions of their neighborhoods and specific concerns related to the physical condition of their area.

Figure 9-1: Optimism about Overall Neighborhood Quality

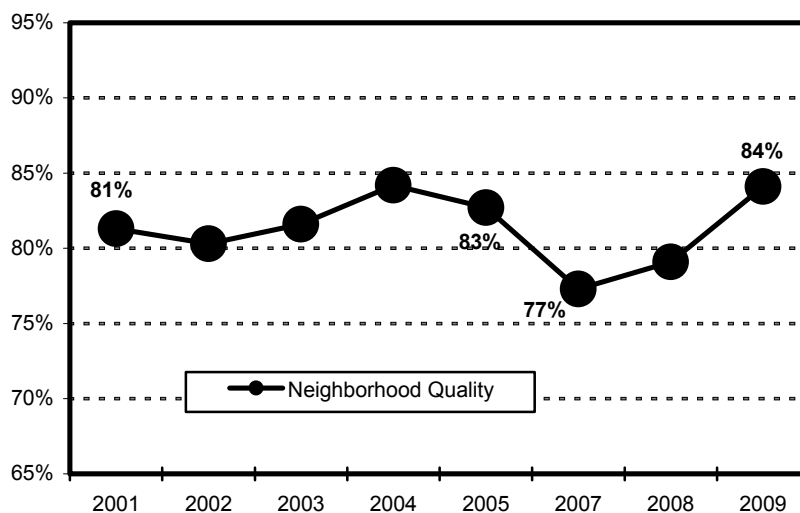


Figure 9-1 shows that 84 percent of Memphians thought their neighborhoods would be the same or better in one year.³⁹ The response to this question shows an improvement of 7 percentage points from 2007. The 2009 rating was tied for the highest score for this measure since the question has been asked.

Figure 9-2: Perceptions of Neighborhoods By Sections of the City

Area of City	Neighborhood Optimism
Southside	90%
Midtown	86%
Southcentral	86%
Downtown	86%
Southwest	85%
Northeast	84%
Northside	84%
Southeast	82%
Fareast	82%
Eastside	80%
Northwest	80%

³⁹ The response rate for this question on neighborhoods was 98 percent.

Figure 9-2 shows the geographical breakdown of the results. Southside had the highest score for neighborhood quality with 90 percent, while the remaining areas were grouped between 80 and 86 percent.

An Overview of Neighborhood Physical Problems

This section examines physical problems in the citizens' neighborhoods, including maintenance of City alleys, litter on streets, trash or weeds on vacant lots, dogs running loose, drainage after rainstorms, rundown houses, pollution in rivers and streams, tires left on the street for more than two weeks, inadequate street lights, and abandoned cars and trucks.⁴⁰ The citizens were asked to indicate whether these issues were problems in their neighborhoods.

Figure 9-3 shows citizens' concerns about specific physical conditions in their neighborhoods. The top tier shows the three highest concerns were alley maintenance (40 percent),⁴¹ litter on neighborhood streets (37 percent), and trash or weeds on vacant lots (33 percent).⁴²

The second highest tier of concerns includes loose dogs (28 percent), drainage after rainstorms (26 percent), rundown houses (22 percent), and river/stream pollution (19 percent).

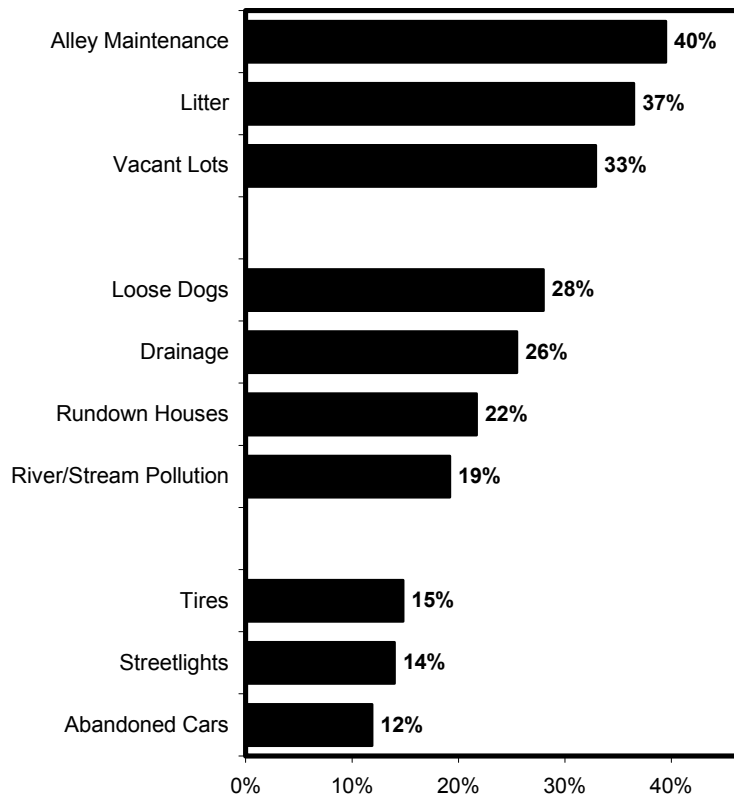
The third tier, with the lowest levels of concern, included tires left on streets for more than two weeks (15 percent), streetlights (14 percent), and abandoned cars (12 percent).

⁴⁰ The response rates for these questions were: alley maintenance (31 percent), litter (100 percent), vacant lots (98 percent), loose dogs (99 percent), drainage (99 percent), rundown houses (99 percent), river & stream pollution (82 percent), tires (98 percent), streetlights (98 percent), and abandoned cars (99 percent).

⁴¹ The response rate for alley maintenance was appropriately low at 31 percent because citizens were asked to answer only if they had alleys in their neighborhoods. The highest response rates were in areas with high numbers of alleys: Midtown, Downtown, and Southside.

⁴² Litter on neighborhood streets and trash/weeds on vacant lots had response rates of 100 and 98 percent respectively, which means that the questions were answered by citizens throughout the City.

Figure 9-3: Citizens' Perceptions of Physical Conditions as Neighborhood Problems

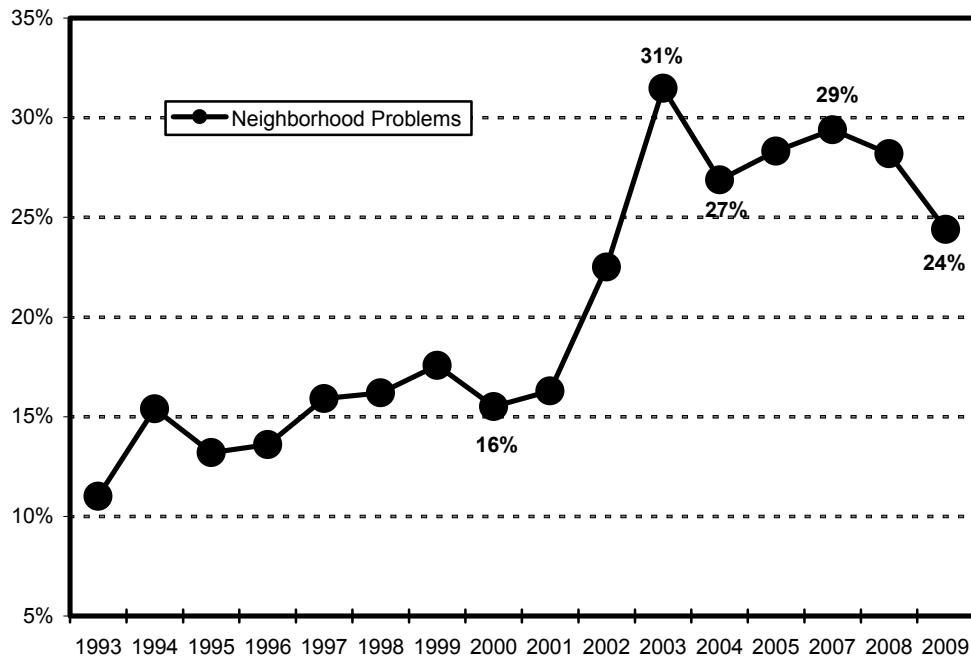


Trend Data

As shown in Figure 9-4, overall concerns for physical problems have declined. There was an improvement of 5 percentage points in overall concerns from 2007 to 2009. Note: lower numbers reflect lower levels of concern, and therefore, are more positive results.

Figure 9-4 shows the average score for citizens' concerns about physical conditions for each year of the Memphis Poll. Concerns about physical conditions were not widespread until 2002, hovering around 15 percent before that time. The level of concern drastically increased between 2001 and 2003, reaching a historic high of 31 percent in 2003. Although improvements have occurred recently, the 24 percent in 2009 is still problematic, compared to early years of the Poll.

Figure 9-4: Average Scores for Concerns with Neighborhood Physical Problems



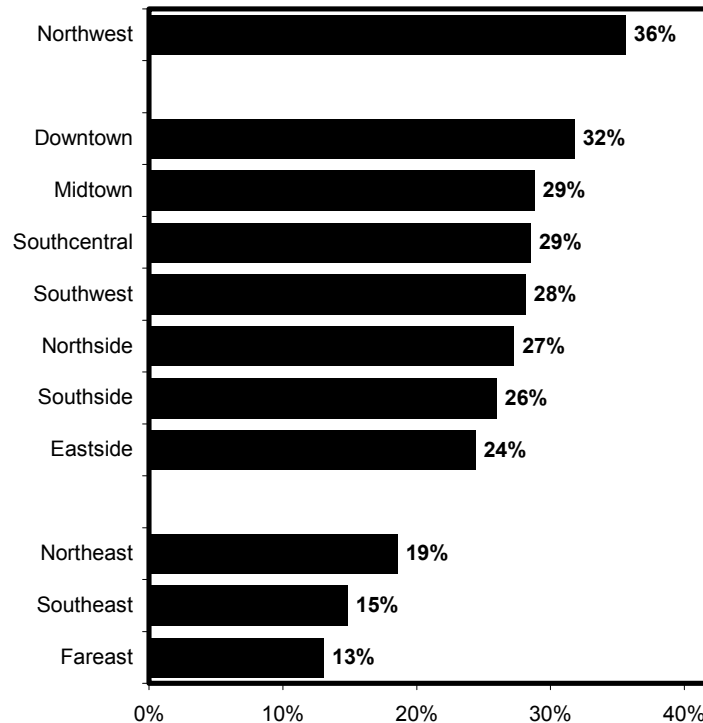
The Memphis Poll also examined overall concerns about physical conditions by sections of the City, as shown in Figure 9-5. The data were divided into three tiers of concerns.

One area of the City, Northwest, had the highest level of concern about physical conditions with a score of 36 percent. This area also had high levels of concern in previous Memphis Polls.

Seven areas of the City had moderate levels of concerns, with scores ranging from 24 to 32 percent. These areas included Downtown (32 percent), Midtown (29 percent), Southcentral (29 percent), Southwest (28 percent), Northside (27 percent), Southside (26 percent), and Eastside (24 percent).

Three areas had lower levels of concern, with scores ranging from 13 percent to 19 percent: Northeast (19 percent), Southeast (15 percent), and Fareast (13 percent).

Figure 9-5: Average Score for Concerns About Physical Problems by Area of the City



Race and Physical Conditions

The Memphis Poll asked ten questions about physical conditions in the citizens' neighborhoods. African Americans were more concerned than whites about two of those physical conditions.⁴³ This finding was far more positive than the 2007 Memphis Poll, when African Americans were more concerned about seven of the physical conditions.

The physical conditions that met this criterion in 2009 were loose dogs (13 percent) and trash and weeds on vacant lots (10 percent).

Eight of the physical conditions did not meet the ten percent threshold to demonstrate differences between African Americans and whites. These conditions were maintenance of alleys, litter on neighborhood streets, drainage after rain storms, rundown houses, pollution in rivers and streams, tires left on the street more than two weeks, streetlights, and abandoned cars.

⁴³ The reader will recall that the Memphis Poll reports differences in findings between African Americans and whites that are 10 percent or greater.

Key Findings about Neighborhood Physical Conditions

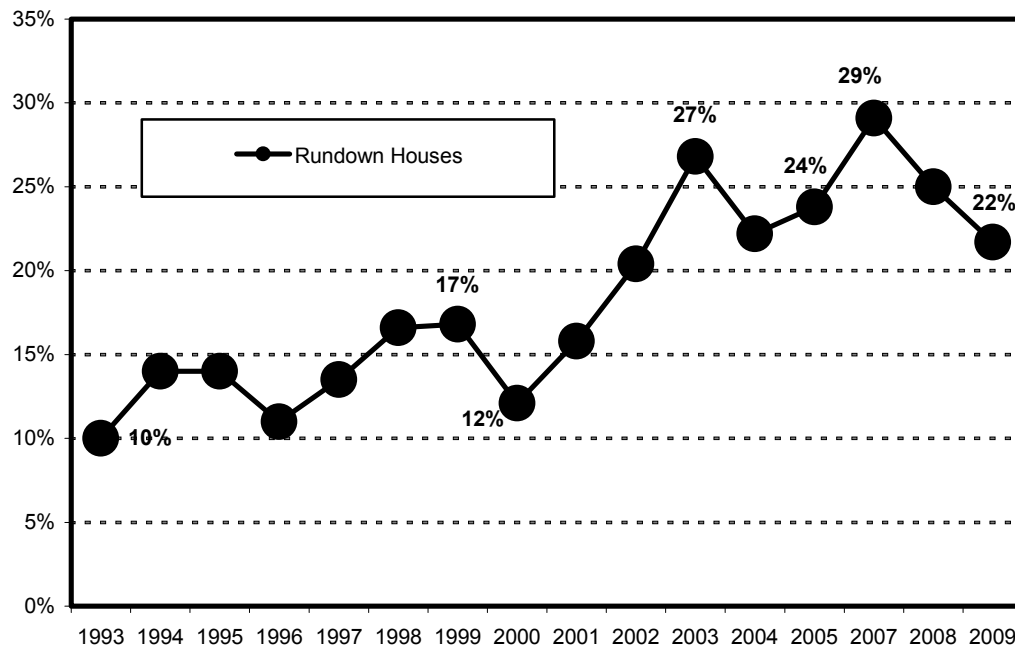
- ❑ Memphians were optimistic about their neighborhoods. Citizens in the Southside area were the most optimistic about their neighborhoods. However, the scores for other areas were clustered, showing there were not areas that stood out as having overwhelming problems.
- ❑ Citizens felt that overall, the City was doing a much better job of addressing physical conditions in their neighborhoods.
- ❑ Citizens in the Northwest area were most concerned about physical problems. Citizens from the Fareast, Southeast, and Northeast areas were least concerned about physical problems.
- ❑ Of the physical conditions in their neighborhoods, citizens were most concerned about litter on streets and trash & weeds on vacant lots.

Chapter 10

Division of Housing and Community Development

This chapter discusses an important division that addresses the physical conditions of neighborhoods through neighborhood revitalization. There may be some redundancy in this chapter and other chapters that follow since responsibility for these issues overlap several divisions. Other agencies are also involved in neighborhood revitalization, including the new Division of Community Enhancement and the Executive Division.

Figure 10-1: Citizens' Concerns About Physical Conditions—Responsibilities of HCD



The Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) works on housing in the City's neighborhoods.⁴⁴ It is the major public funding source in the City of Memphis for both housing construction and rehabilitation. In addition, the Division of Housing and Community Development provides support for neighborhood economic development.

⁴⁴ Although not formally joined, the same director administers both the Division of Housing and Community Development and the Memphis Housing Authority.

Physical Conditions

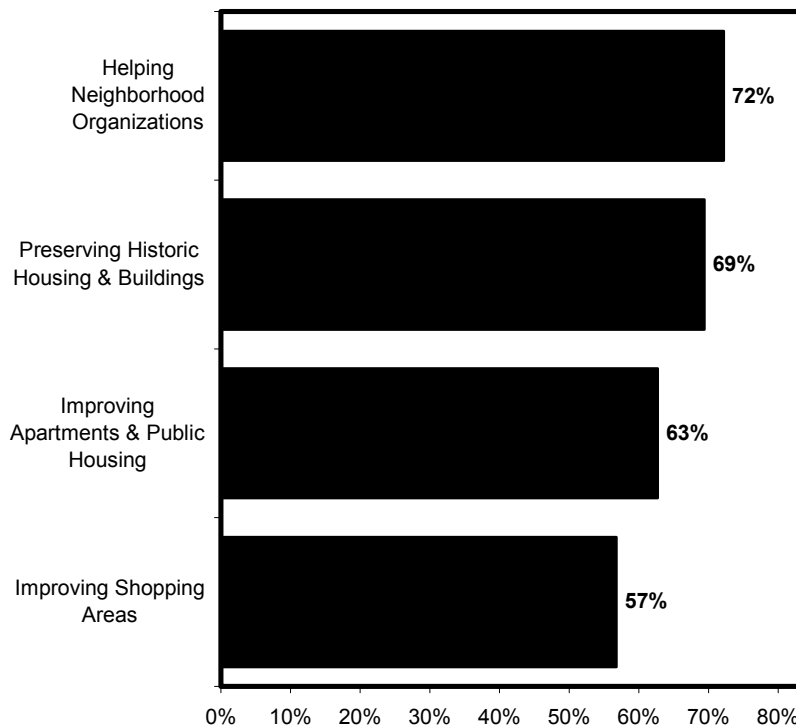
This division is responsible for several issues related to physical conditions of the citizens' neighborhoods.

Figure 10-1 shows citizens' concerns about rundown houses in their neighborhoods. Twenty-two (22) percent of citizens expressed concerns about rundown houses in 2009.⁴⁵ This was a 7 percentage-point improvement from the 2007 Memphis Poll.

Services

Figure 10-2 shows the citizens' ratings of neighborhood revitalization services related to the Division of Housing and Community Development.⁴⁶

Figure 10-2: Citizens' Perceptions of Neighborhood Services Provided by Division of Housing and Community Development



⁴⁵ The response rate for this question about rundown houses was 99 percent.

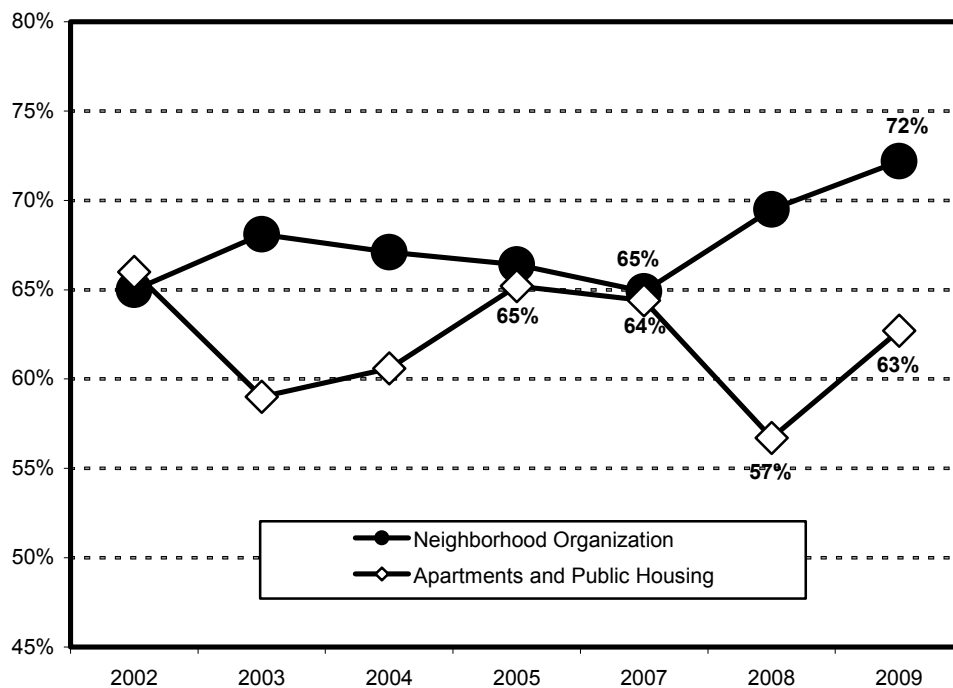
⁴⁶ The response rates for these questions were: neighborhood organizations (73 percent), historic housing (50 percent), apartments and public housing (65 percent), and shopping areas (82 percent).

Overall, citizens thought these efforts were mediocre. The average score for the four services was 65 percent, which was considerably lower than the average score of 80 for overall City services.

Figure 10-2 shows that 72 percent of the citizens thought the City was doing a good job helping out neighborhood organizations,⁴⁷ 69 percent of the citizens thought that the City was doing a good job in preserving historic housing and buildings,⁴⁸ 63 percent thought they were doing a good job improving apartments and public housing,⁴⁹ and 57 percent of the citizens thought the City was doing a good job improving shopping areas.⁵⁰

Figure 10-3 and 10-4 provide trend data for the seven years of the Memphis Poll in which these services have been examined.

Figure 10-3: Neighborhood Services—Helping Neighborhood Organization and Improving Apartments and Public Housing



Two of the service measures have had recent positive trends. Figure 10-3 shows an increase of 7 percentage points since 2007 for helping the citizens'

⁴⁷ This function is shared with the Office of Planning and Development and the Executive Division.

⁴⁸ This function is shared with the Office of Planning and Development.

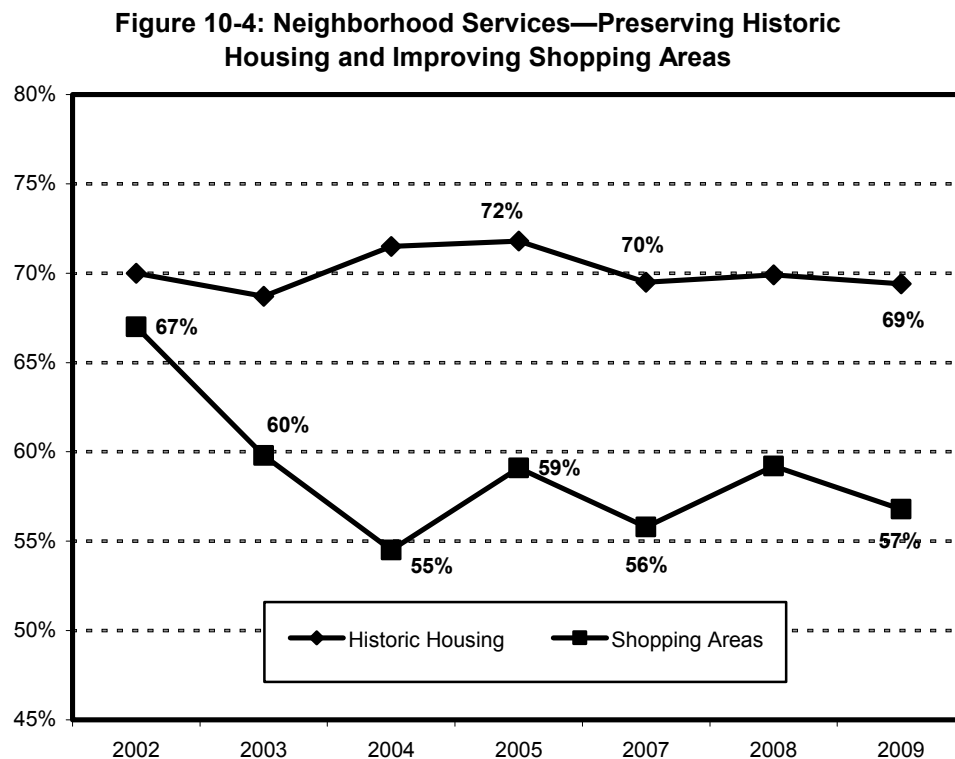
⁴⁹ This function is shared with the Division of Community Enhancement.

⁵⁰ This function is shared with the Office of Planning and Development.

neighborhood organizations. In the previous four years, the trend line was flat at around 65 percent.

Figure 10-3 also shows that citizens were more pleased with addressing apartment buildings and public housing in their neighborhoods. Specifically, there was a 6 percentage-point improvement over 2008.⁵¹ Though positive, these finding remain somewhat problematic. The one-year improvement brought the results for 2009 into roughly the same range as in the time period of 2004 to 2007.

Two of the services did not have positive results. Figure 10-4 shows that the citizens' ratings of preserving historic housing and buildings in their neighborhoods have varied only slightly over the seven years that the question has been asked. The rating for improving the condition of shopping areas in the citizens' neighborhood was even more problematic. The 57 percent score was not only one of the lowest in the Memphis Poll, but it was considerably lower than the score of 67 percent in 2002.



Whites were more positive about improving apartments & public housing and preserving historic housing & buildings than were African Americans.

⁵¹ The City is devoting substantial resources to rebuilding public housing into mixed-income developments, but anecdotally it appears privately-owned apartments seemed to be suffering increasing decay.

Key Findings about the Division of Housing and Community Development

- ❑ The ratings for helping neighborhood organizations and improving apartment buildings and public housing improved, but still remain below average compared to overall City services.
- ❑ In contrast, the ratings for preserving historic housing & buildings and improving shopping areas were the same and remained well below average.

Chapter 11

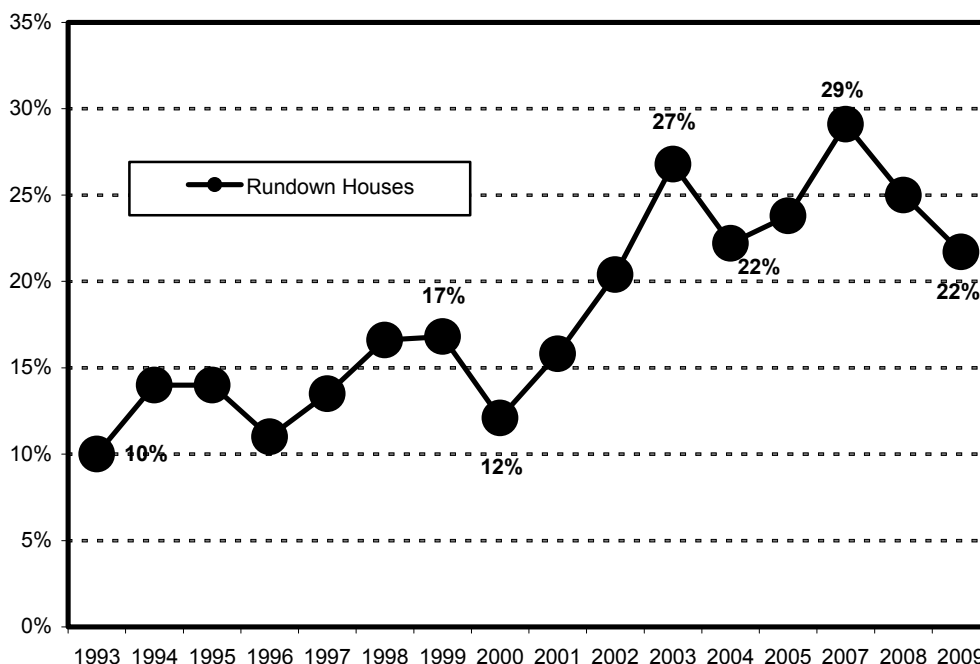
Division of Community Enhancement

The Division of Community Enhancement was created in early 2008 to deal with blight found in many City neighborhoods. The division addresses housing code enforcement issues, vacant lots, and litter.

Several agencies were moved to this new division, including housing code enforcement from the Division of Housing and Community Development, grounds maintenance from the Division of General Services (responsible for handling weed complaints, downtown maintenance, sweeping streets, and litter pick up on public streets), and the City Beautiful Commission from the Division of General Services.

This chapter will review both the physical conditions in the City that relate to the mission of this new division and services over which it now has authority. It will also include information from earlier years, when the services were under the direction of other divisions, to provide a context about the short-term improvements due to this newly created division.

Figure 11-1: Citizens' Concerns About Physical Conditions—Rundown Houses

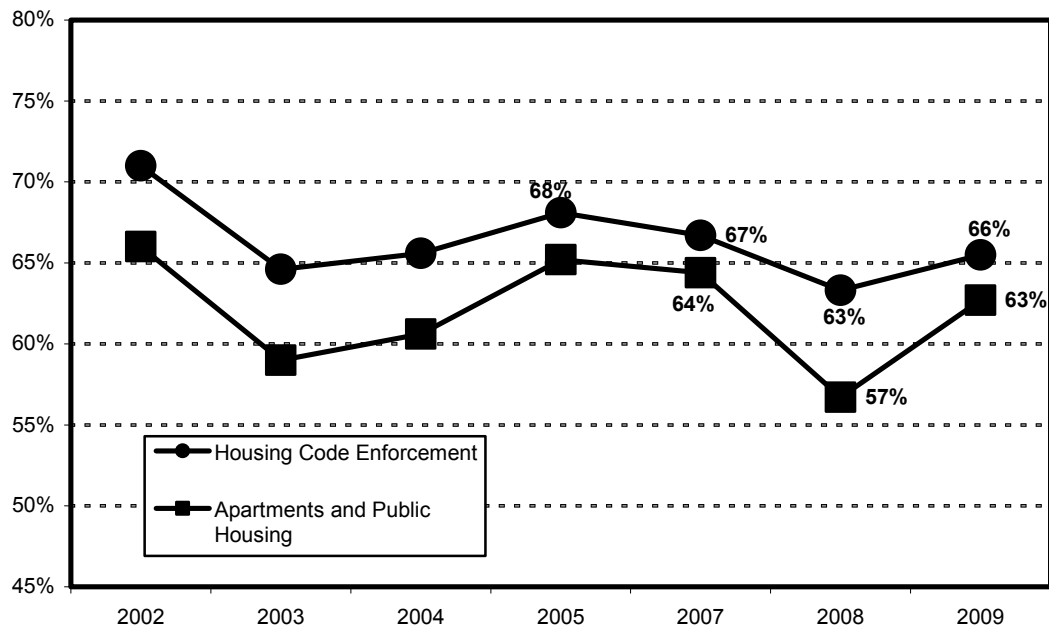


Rundown Houses

The Division of Community Enhancement is responsible for dealing with blight from rundown houses.⁵² Figure 11-1 shows that 22 percent of the citizens were concerned about rundown houses in their neighborhoods in 2009.⁵³ This result was a 7 percentage-point improvement from 2007. The conclusion is that the Community Enhancement continued the improvements that were started by its predecessor.

Even with this decline, concerns remain relatively high. Concerns were 20 percent in 2002 and even lower in earlier years. However, the 2009 findings are positive and might indicate the continuation of a promising trend.

Figure 11-2: Trends in Housing Code Enforcement—Requiring Owners to Maintain Property



The Memphis Poll also asked citizens if the City was doing a good job in housing code enforcement. The specific question asked if the City was doing a good job of requiring property owners to maintain housing in the citizens' neighborhoods. The Poll also asked a related question about improving apartments and public

⁵² This responsibility for dealing with rundown houses is shared by two divisions. The Division of Community Enhancement deals with rundown houses through code enforcement and demolition, while the Division of Housing and Community Development deals with rundown houses through subsidizing construction and rehabilitation of housing. The Division of Housing and Community Development was responsible for housing code enforcement in 2007 and the Division of Community Enhancement was responsible for code enforcement in 2008.

⁵³ The response rate for this question about rundown houses was 99 percent.

housing. This latter question is a code enforcement issue related to apartments, but the Division of Community Enhancement does not have responsibility for public housing.

Figure 11-2 shows that 66 percent of the citizens thought the City was doing a good job in housing code enforcement, and 63 percent thought that the City was doing a good job in improving apartments & public housing.⁵⁴ Both of these findings are improvements over 2008, with housing code enforcement improving by 3 percentage points and apartments & public housing by 6 percentage points. In the latter case, some or most of the impact is due to improving public housing which is a function of the Division of Housing and Community Development.⁵⁵

These data are still far below the average score of 80 percent for City services and are also more problematic compared to when the question was first asked.

Citizens were asked if they called City Hall about rundown houses. The calls went to the Mayor's Citizen Service Center which then forwarded the complaints to the housing code enforcement office. Five (5) percent of the citizens called City Hall about a problem with a rundown house in their neighborhood.

The Poll asked if the City was responsive to their concerns about rundown houses. Responsiveness is an average of promptness and solving the concern. Figure 11-3 shows that, in 2009, 53 percent of the citizens thought that the City was responsive to their requests. In addition, the figure shows that there has been a steady decline in the citizens' ratings from 2005 to 2009.

These findings suggest an analytical conundrum. The overall data on housing conditions and code enforcement programs indicate that citizens thought there were improvements in this service. In contrast, the citizens who called City Hall for assistance about rundown houses indicated very low – and declining – levels of satisfaction with the City's response. The group of citizens calling City Hall also did not feel the City was doing a good job in delivering housing code enforcement services.⁵⁶

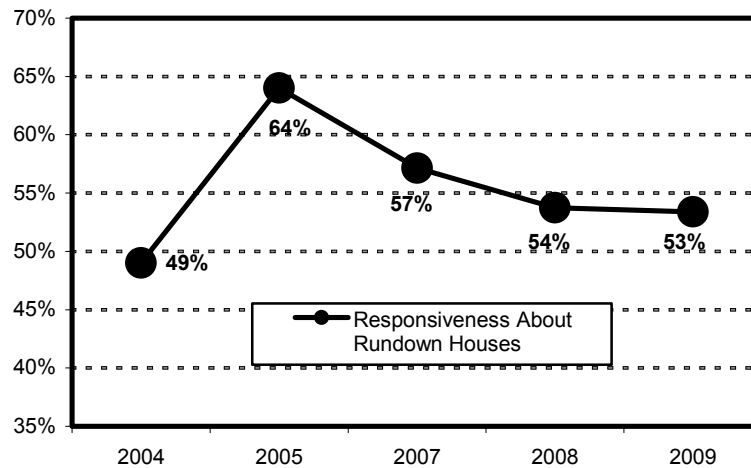
⁵⁴ The response rates for these questions were: housing code (91 percent) and apartments and public housing (65 percent).

⁵⁵ Whites were more positive about improving apartments & public housing than African Americans were.

⁵⁶ Only 29 percent of citizens who contacted the City about rundown housing thought the City was doing a good job of delivering this service, compared to 66 percent for all citizens. In addition, 59 percent of these citizens thought rundown houses were a problem, compared to the overall score of 22 percent.

These data suggest a strategy that the City should work more closely with citizens calling City Hall about rundown houses and housing code enforcement. Housing code enforcement is a labyrinth of procedures and issues, and citizens are sometimes frustrated by the delay. These citizens who call City Hall are closest to the problem, and reaching out to them would be an effective strategy.

**Figure 11-3: Citizens' Perceptions
Responsiveness About Rundown House**



Abandoned Vehicles

The Division of Community Enhancement is responsible for responding to the citizens' complaints about abandoned vehicles, also called junk cars. This function was formerly located in the Division of Housing and Community Development and moved to Community Enhancement in January of 2008.

**Figure 11-4: Citizens' Concerns About Physical
Conditions—Abandoned Vehicles**

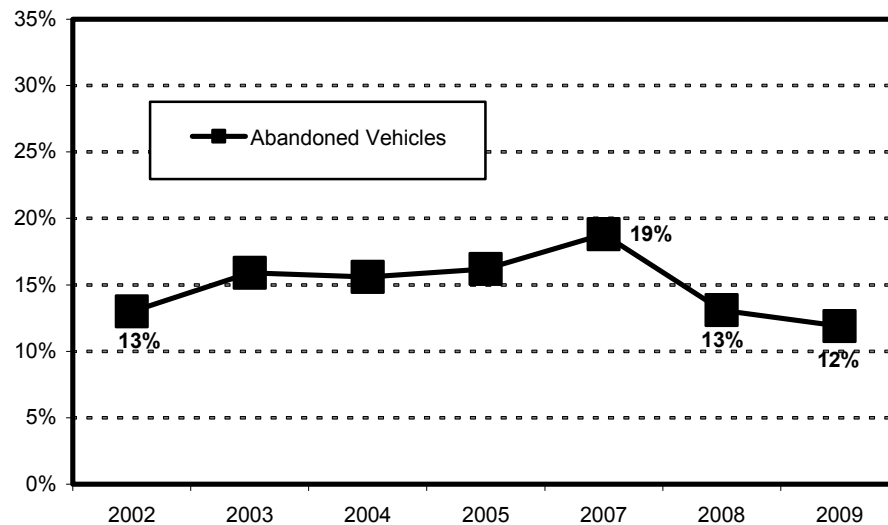
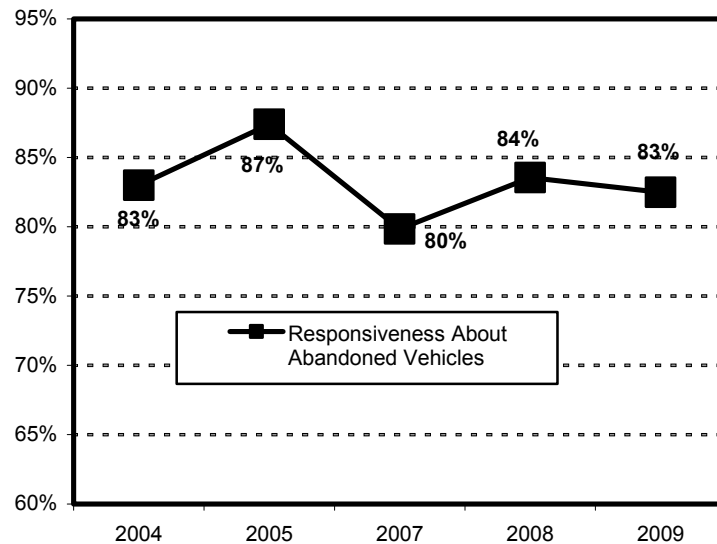


Figure 11-4 shows that, in 2009, concerns about abandoned vehicles were low, a positive finding.⁵⁷ This was an improvement in the citizens' ratings of 7 percentage points when comparing 2007 and 2009. Also, the 12 percent score in 2009 is the most positive response in the entire time this question has been asked.

Figure 11-5: Citizens' Perceptions of Code Enforcement's Responsiveness About Abandoned Vehicles



Next, the Memphis Poll asked citizens if they called City Hall about abandoned vehicles. The calls went to the Mayor's Citizen Service Center which then forwarded the complaint to the housing code enforcement office. The Poll found that 4 percent of the citizens called about an abandoned vehicle problem in their neighborhood.

The Poll asked if the City was responsive about abandoned vehicles. Code enforcement and the police share responsibility for abating this problem. Code enforcement deals with abandoned vehicles on private property and the police deal with abandoned vehicles on public streets. Responsiveness is an average of promptness in addressing the concerns and solving the concerns.

Figure 11-5 shows that 83 percent of those who contacted the City about abandoned vehicles thought that the City was responsive to their requests. The rating for responsiveness to abandoned vehicles is above the 80 percent average for overall City services. The trend line in Figure 11-5 also shows that the service ratings have ranged from 80 percent to 87 percent over the last five years.

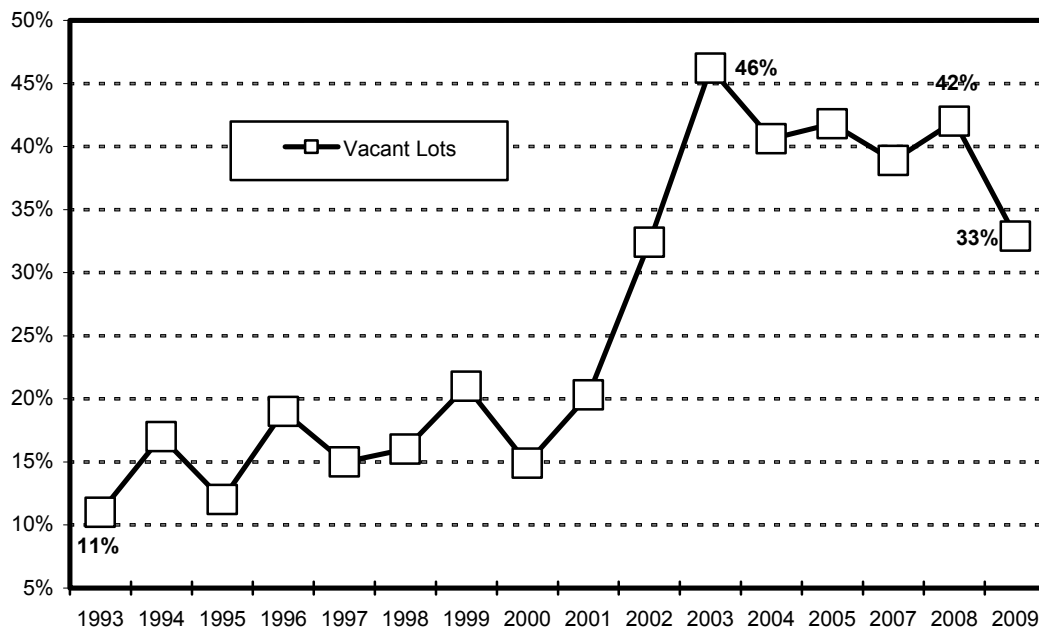
⁵⁷ The response rate for this question about abandoned vehicles was 99 percent.

Vacant Lots

The Division of Community Enhancement is in charge of dealing with vacant lots. This function was formerly located in the Division of General Services in their grounds maintenance office. The office processes complaints about vacant lots and notifies owners that are not in compliance. Some of the lots are then mowed by contractors hired by the City and the fee is added to the tax bill—although it is often not collected. Lots owned by Shelby County are not mowed by the City and these complaints are sometimes forwarded to the County by the Mayor’s Citizen Service Center.

Figure 11-6 shows that the citizens’ concerns about trash and weeds on vacant lots declined by a substantial 9 percentage points from 2008 to 2009.⁵⁸ The improvements are most likely due to the Division of Community Enhancement. However, data from the 2010 Memphis Poll will be needed to confirm this finding.

Figure 11-6: Citizens' Concerns About Physical Conditions—Trash and Weeds on Vacant Lots



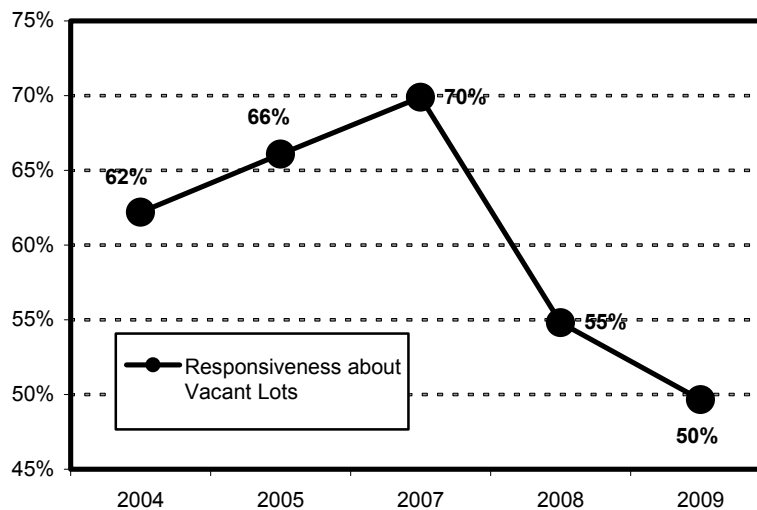
Next, the Memphis Poll asked citizens if they called City Hall about trash and weeds on vacant lots. The calls went to the Mayor’s Citizen Service Center, which then forwarded the complaints to the grounds maintenance office. Eight (8) percent of the citizens called about a vacant lot problem in their

⁵⁸ The response rate for this question about trash and weeds on vacant lots was 98 percent.

neighborhood. Because these calls occur mostly during the summer, the volume of calls is very high over a short time period.

The Memphis Poll asked citizens if the City was responsive to their concerns about trash and weeds on vacant lots. Responsiveness is an average of promptness in addressing the concerns and solving the concerns. Figure 11-7 shows that only 50 percent of the citizens thought that the City was responsive to their requests. These data show a decline of 20 percentage points in responsiveness from 2007 to 2009. The service is on the low end of ratings for City services, which had an average score of 80 percent.

Figure 11-7: Citizens' Perceptions of Responsiveness About Vacant Lots



These findings also suggest an analytical conundrum. The data on concerns about vacant lots show that citizens thought there was improvement. In contrast, the data that examined only the citizens who called City Hall for assistance with their complaint about vacant lots shows both a low score and a decline in the ratings since 2007.⁵⁹

These findings suggest that the Division of Community Enhancement, working with the Mayor's Citizen Service Center which is the intake for calls, should consider conducting a survey of callers to determine why they were concerned

⁵⁹ The group of citizens calling City Hall was also more likely to indicate that vacant lots were a problem. The Memphis Poll found that 65 percent of these citizens thought vacant lots were a problem, compared to the overall scores for all citizens of 33 percent.

about the calls they made to City Hall. The division should also coordinate with the Shelby County Land Bank, which owns many vacant lots in the City.

Litter on Neighborhood Streets

The new Division of Community Enhancement is in charge of dealing with litter. There did not seem to be an agency which was previously implementing this responsibility.

Figure 11-8: Litter on Neighborhood Streets

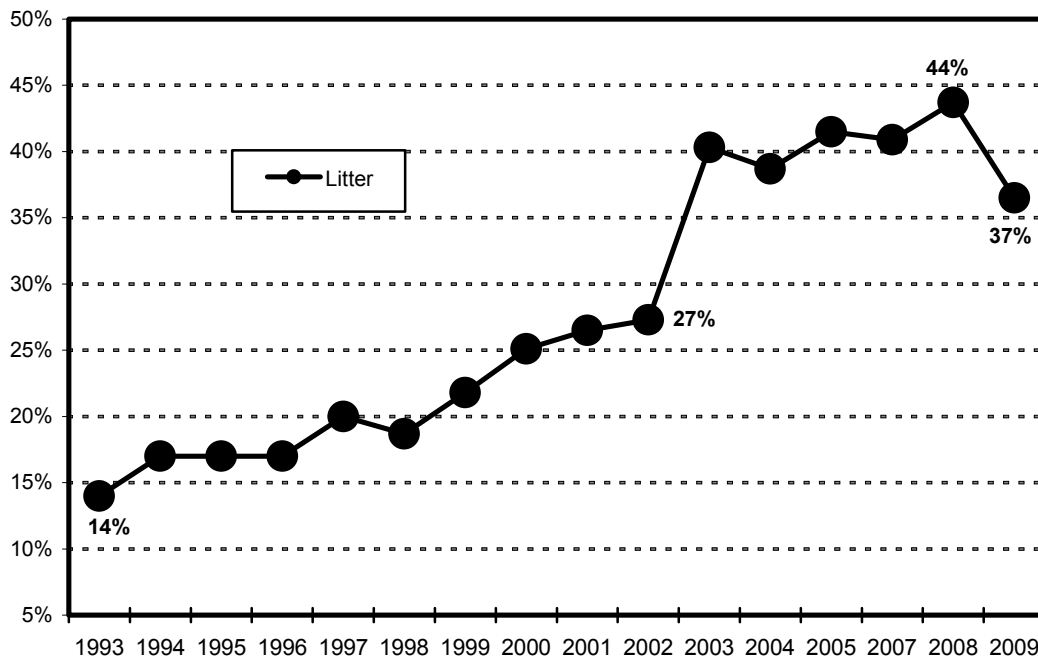


Figure 11-8 shows that 37 percent of the citizens were concerned about litter in 2009, an improvement of 7 percentage points from 2008 to 2009.⁶⁰ The 2009 result is the only time in the sixteen years of the Memphis Poll that there has been a substantial improvement in the citizens' ratings for litter on neighborhood streets. In addition, it appears that the Division of Community Enhancement, working in a partnership with community groups, is responsible for these improved conditions.

⁶⁰ The response rate for this question about litter on streets was 100 percent.

Key Findings about the Division of Community Enhancement

- ❑ The citizens thought that there were identifiable improvements in vacant lots, litter on neighborhood streets, and rundown houses.
- ❑ However, citizens that called City Hall for assistance with vacant lots and rundown houses felt that the division was not responsive to their specific concerns.

Chapter 12

Executive Division

The Executive Division includes the Mayor's Office, Chief Administrative Office, Information Services, Internal Auditing, Mayor's Citizen Service Center, and the Office of Youth Service and Community Affairs.

Neighborhood Relations

Neighborhood Relations reports to the Office of Youth Service and Community Affairs in the Executive Division.⁶¹ According to the Neighborhood Relations' newsletter, the mission of the office is "to help build capacity in neighborhoods as it serves as a conduit to make government more accessible to the citizens of Memphis." It issues an attractive newsletter, hosts a variety of workshops on issues of interest to neighborhoods, and publishes a neighborhood directory.

This section describes the findings of the Memphis Poll that are related to the mission of this office.

Figure 12-1: Perception about Overall Neighborhood Quality

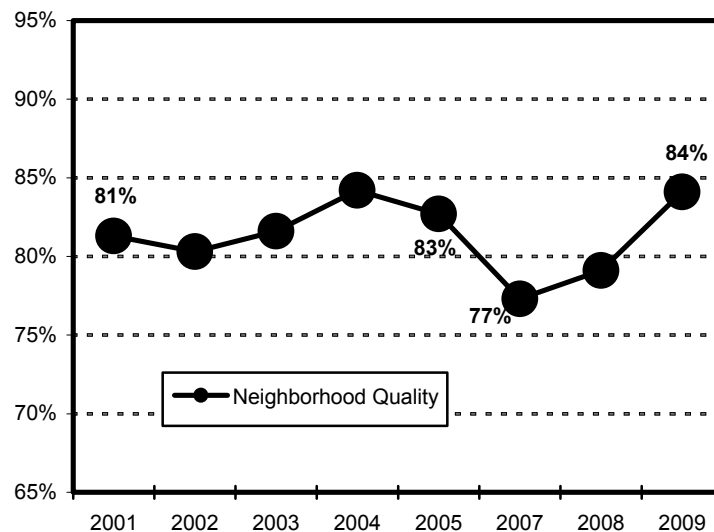


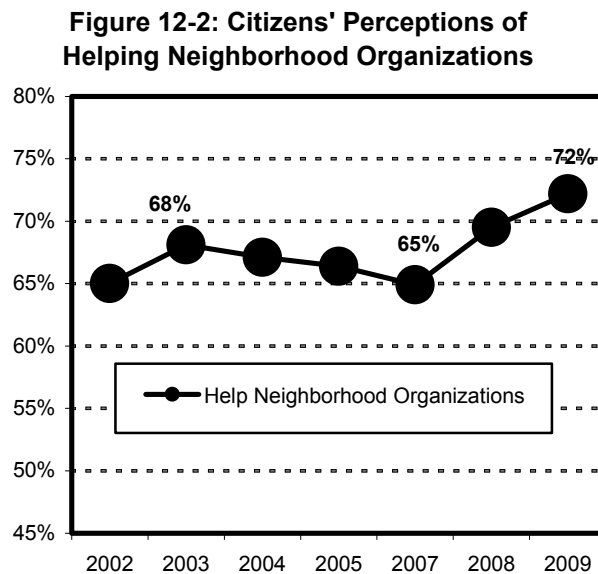
Figure 12-1 shows that 84 percent of Memphians thought their neighborhoods would be the same or better in one year. The response to this question shows an

⁶¹ It was formerly called the Center for Neighborhoods, which was located on Seventh Street near downtown and has now moved to South Hollywood Street.

improvement of 7 percentage points from 2007 to 2009.⁶² The 2009 rating was tied for the highest score for this measure since the question has been asked.

Next, the Poll asked if the City was doing a good job of helping the citizens' neighborhood organizations.⁶³ The response rate of 73 percent suggests that 27 percent of the citizens were not familiar with their neighborhood organizations or with the City's activities in this area.

Of those who responded to this question, 72 percent of the citizens thought the City was doing a good job of helping their neighborhood organizations. As Figure 12-2 shows this is an improvement of 7 percentage points when compared to 2007. Hopefully, these data reflect a new trend of increasingly positive ratings of this City service. However, the rating for this service was lower than the average score of 80 percent for all City services.



Mayor's Citizen Service Center (MCSC)

The Mayor's Citizen Service Center receives complaints from citizens and forwards those complaints to the appropriate agency.⁶⁴ Complaints to the City are received by both the MCSC and the responsible agency.

⁶² The response rate for this question on neighborhoods was 98 percent.

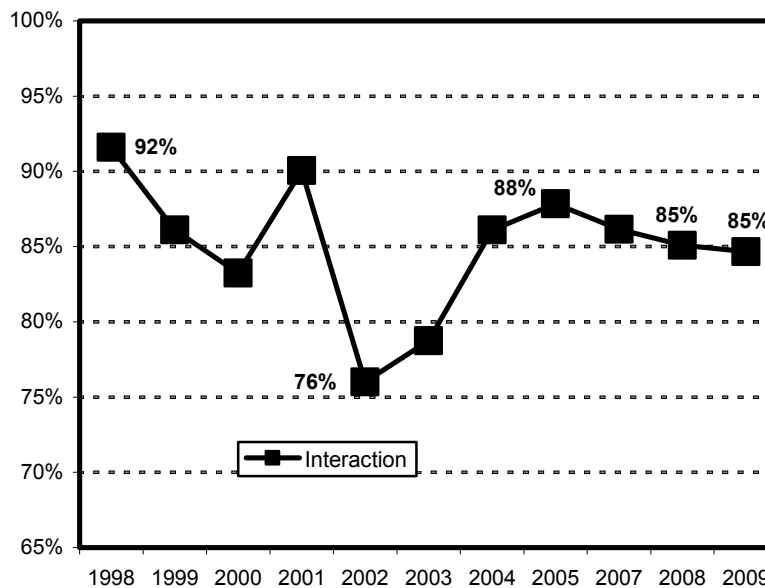
⁶³ Responsibility for this service is shared with the Division of Housing and Community Development.

⁶⁴ The MCSC was formerly under the management of the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods until 2005.

The Poll examined the interaction component for the Mayor's Citizen Service Center since its main task is to deal with citizens complaints. Interaction includes phone professionalism and courtesy.⁶⁵ The Memphis Poll found that 60 percent of the calls for conventional service requests (vacant lots, rundown houses, abandoned vehicles, solid waste, streets, and other issues) went directly to the Mayor's Citizen Service Center. The Division of Public Works directly received the majority of calls for solid waste and streets.⁶⁶

Figure 12-3 shows that 85 percent of the citizens thought that the Mayor's Citizen Service Center was doing a good job in interaction. The results were slightly lower than in 2005, but considerably higher than the 76 percent rating in 2002. The rating of 85 percent is above the 80 percent average for City services. As a comparison, the interaction rating for Memphis Light, Gas and Water was 80 percent. The interaction ratings for solid waste and streets that went directly to the Division of Public Works were 82 percent and 76 percent, respectively.

**Figure 12-3: Citizens' Perceptions of Interaction
by Mayor's Citizen Service Center (MCSC)**



⁶⁵ The question asked if the office was courteous *and* attentive during their call for service.

⁶⁶ These findings, and those in the next paragraph, are documented in Chapter 18.

Key Findings about the Executive Division

- ❑ Citizens thought that the City was doing a slightly better job of helping neighborhood organizations, although the ratings were still somewhat low.
- ❑ Citizens were generally satisfied in dealing with the Mayor's Citizen Service Center staff when calling City Hall about a problem.

Chapter 13

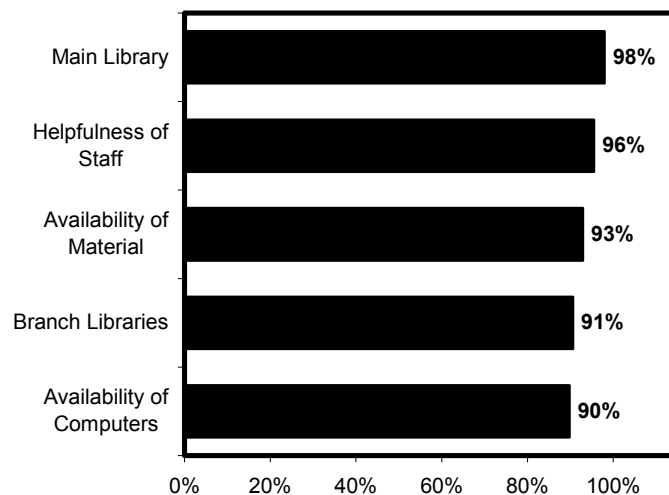
Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods

The Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods administers the Public Library and Information Center, Animal Shelter, and the Sexual Assault Center. Although “neighborhoods” is part of the division’s name, those functions, such as the Center for Neighborhoods and housing code enforcement, were transferred to other divisions in earlier years.

Memphis Public Library and Information Center

The public libraries are an important component of the City’s services. For simplicity, the terminology “public libraries” is used for the Memphis Public Library and Information Center. The public libraries include the central library, branches, and several outreach activities. Starting in 2005 the system was absorbed by the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods, and is now fully integrated into Memphis City government.

Figure 13-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Public Libraries



The public libraries have been consistently rated among the very highest services provided by the City of Memphis.⁶⁷ Figure 13-1 shows the rankings for the

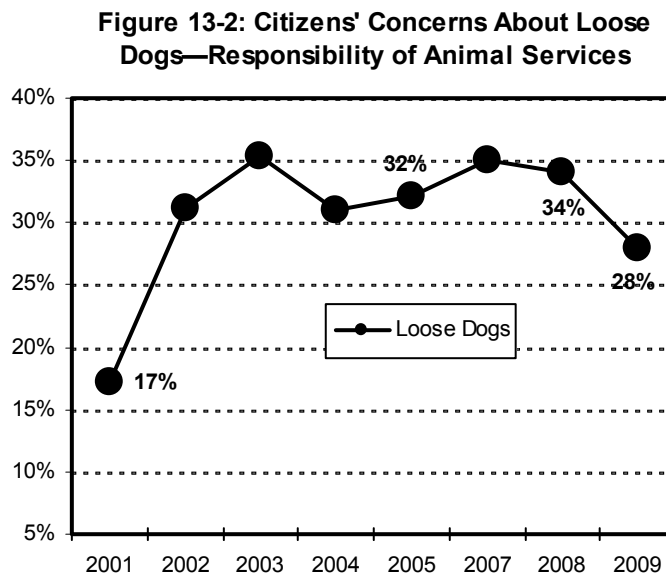
⁶⁷ The response rates for these questions were: main library (81 percent), helpfulness of staff (88 percent), library materials (90 percent), library branches (85 percent), and availability of computers (83 percent).

overall quality of the main library (98 percent), the helpfulness of the staff (96 percent), the availability of materials (93 percent), overall quality of branches (91 percent), and the availability of computers (90 percent). The average score of all these services is 93 percent. These ratings place the public libraries among the elite of City services. The results for 2003, 2005, 2007, and 2008 (the years in which the libraries were studied) were very similar to this year's results.

Memphis Animal Services

Figure 13-2 provides information about loose dogs⁶⁸, a physical problem that is the responsibility of Memphis Animal Services which is part of the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods. Twenty-eight (28) percent of the citizens were concerned about loose dogs in their neighborhoods. This was a 6 percentage-point improvement over the findings in 2008, and was a discernable improvement in the ratings when compared to 2002.

Although there have been improvements over the last couple of years, the overall score of 28 percent indicates that loose dogs remain a problem. In addition, this score indicates much greater concerns about loose dogs than the rating in 2001, which was 17 percent. The Memphis Poll did not examine this issue prior to 2001.



The Memphis Poll did not include a question about how good a job the division was doing in controlling loose dogs in the citizens' neighborhoods.

⁶⁸ The response rate for this question about loose dogs was 99 percent.

Key Findings about the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods

- ❑ Citizens rated the Memphis Public Library & Information Center among the highest rated City services.
- ❑ Citizens felt that the division was doing a better job of addressing loose dogs in their neighborhoods, although the overall score indicated substantial levels of concern about this issue.

Chapter 14

Division of Public Works

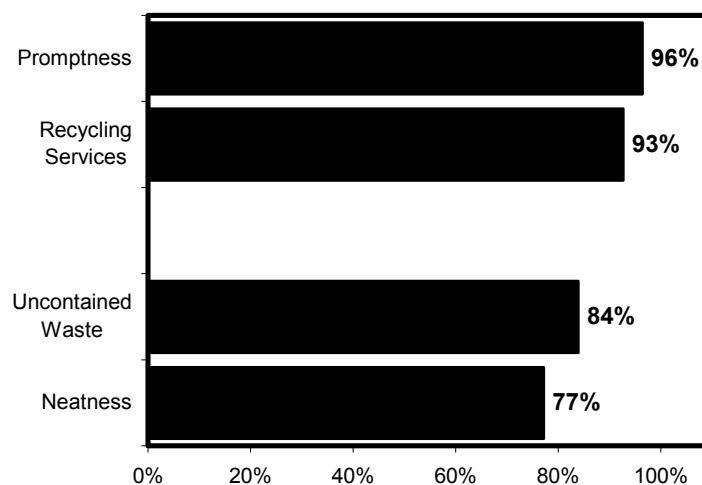
This chapter examines the services provided by the Division of Public Works. It delivers solid waste collection through the solid waste management program. The Division of Public Works also provides street maintenance, works on sewers, and addresses problems with rivers and streams.

The latter portions of this chapter will address some of the concerns that citizens had about the physical conditions in their neighborhoods, which are related to the mission of this division.

Solid Waste Management Services

The Memphis Poll asked questions about a variety of services offered by solid waste management. This section examines four measures—promptness, recycling services, uncontained trash collection, and neatness. These questions were asked of all respondents and consequently the following data are from citizens who received solid waste services from the City of Memphis crews and private companies.

Figure 14-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Solid Waste Management Services

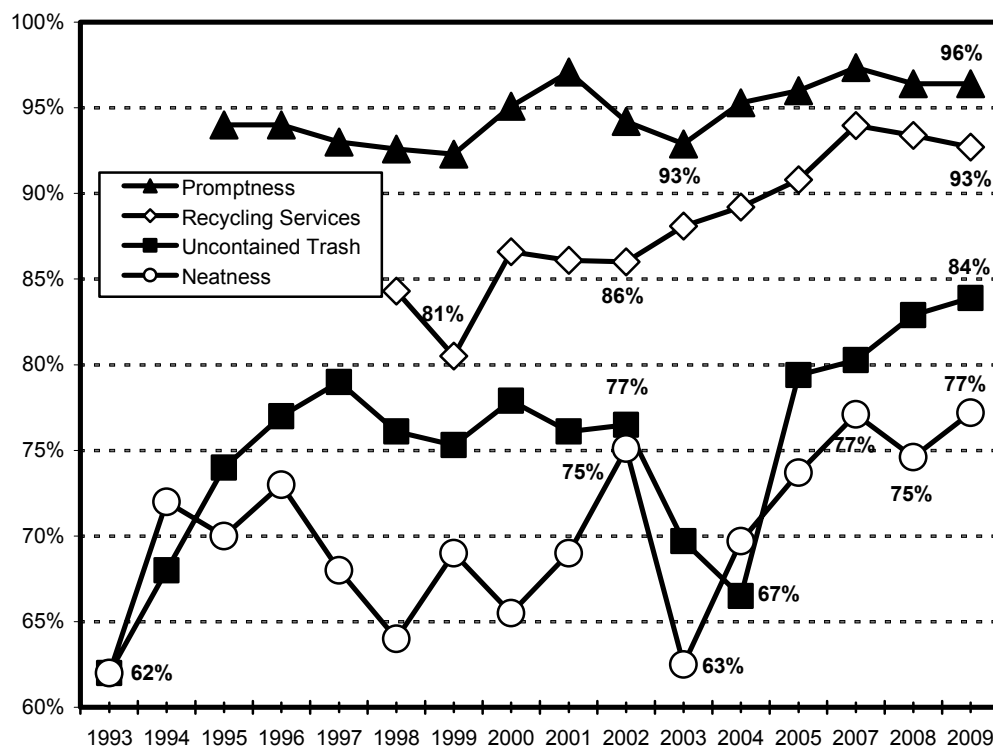


This method is appropriate since private companies are employed by the City to deliver solid waste services to some areas of Memphis. The City is not

responsible for delivering services to some apartments and businesses. However, it also has a regulatory role in requiring that contractors and other commercial entities adequately perform pick up of solid waste.

Figure 14-1 displays the results for promptness. Promptness was measured by asking if solid waste collectors consistently emptied the cart on the regular collection day.⁶⁹ A very high 96 percent agreed with this statement, which made solid waste promptness one of the most highly rated services in the Memphis Poll. Figure 14-2 displays the trends for promptness. It shows that promptness has had remarkable consistency, remaining in the same high range over the years of the Memphis Poll in which promptness was measured.

Figure 14-2: Trends in Citizens' Perceptions of Solid Waste Management Services



The Poll examined citizens' perceptions of recycling services on solid waste routes. Citizens were asked if the solid waste collectors emptied the recycling materials on the scheduled collection day. Figure 14-1 shows 93 percent of the citizens agreed with this statement, which places it among the elite City services. Figure 14-2 shows that recycling has improved over the years of the Memphis

⁶⁹ The response rates for these questions were: promptness (98 percent), recycling services (90 percent), uncontained waste (94 percent), and neatness (98 percent).

Poll. The long-term trend shows improvement from 81 percent in 1999 to 93 percent in 2009.

Next, the collection of trash/yard waste (called uncontained trash) was examined by asking whether solid waste collectors picked up large items, such as limbs and appliances, within one week. Figure 14-1 shows that 84 percent of the citizens agreed with the statement. This rating was above average when compared to the score for overall City services.

The trend data in Figure 14-2 show that citizens were increasingly pleased with uncontained trash collection compared to earlier years of the Memphis Poll. Citizens' satisfaction with uncontained trash collection declined in both 2003 and 2004. However, in 2009, 84 percent of the citizens were satisfied with uncontained trash collection, a 17 percentage-point improvement since 2004. In addition, trash collection has risen to the highest score since the beginning of the Poll.

The last service, neatness, was measured by whether citizens thought solid waste collectors were careful by not spilling waste when emptying carts. Neatness appeals to citizens because it shows that the City cares about its neighborhoods. Neatness by solid waste collection crews also decreases the level of trash and litter on Memphis streets.

Seventy-seven (77) percent of the citizens were satisfied with neatness, a figure that was below average when compared to the overall approval rating of 80 percent for City services. However, the trend data for neatness were very positive, as shown in Figure 14-2. The ratings for neatness increased from 63 percent in 2003 to 77 percent in the current Poll—a 14 percentage-point improvement.

The Memphis Poll examined if there were differences in the service measures between citizens who had collection by City of Memphis crews or private companies. Eighty-six (86) percent of the citizens said they received collection from City crews and 14 percent said they received collection from private companies.⁷⁰ The ratings for services provided by the City were somewhat higher than those provided by private companies. Private companies had higher scores for neatness, while the City had higher scores for recycling, promptness, and uncontained waste.

⁷⁰ The response rate for public or private waste collection was 100 percent.

Contacting Solid Waste Management Services

This section discusses the citizens' experience when they called solid waste management for assistance. For example, citizens may have called to complain about a missed collection day or the need to pick up uncontained trash.

Figure 14-3 provides the ratings for citizen interaction with solid waste management employees. Eight-two (82) percent of the citizens were satisfied with interaction, which included phone professionalism and courtesy.⁷¹ This was very close to the scores in the previous four years and in the same range when compared to earlier years of the Memphis Poll.

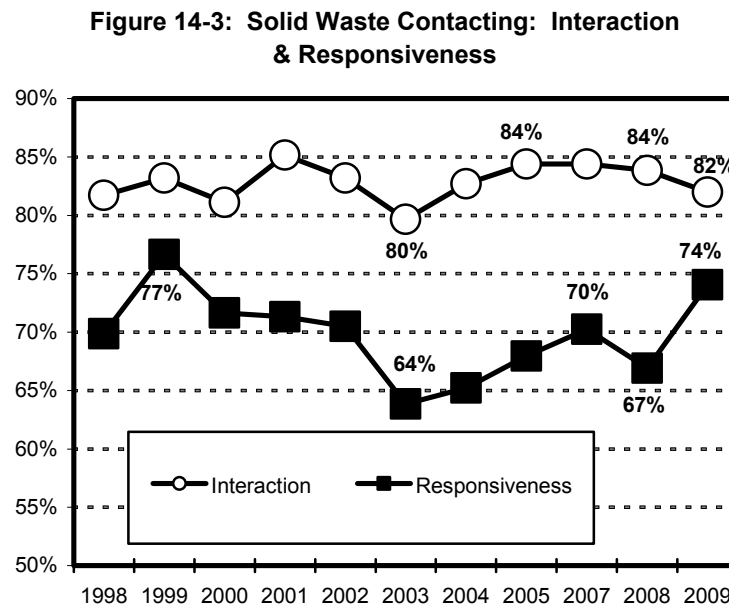


Figure 14-3 shows that 74 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the responsiveness of solid waste management. Responsiveness is based on both promptness and solving the concerns. This result was below average when compared to the 80 percent overall score for City services.

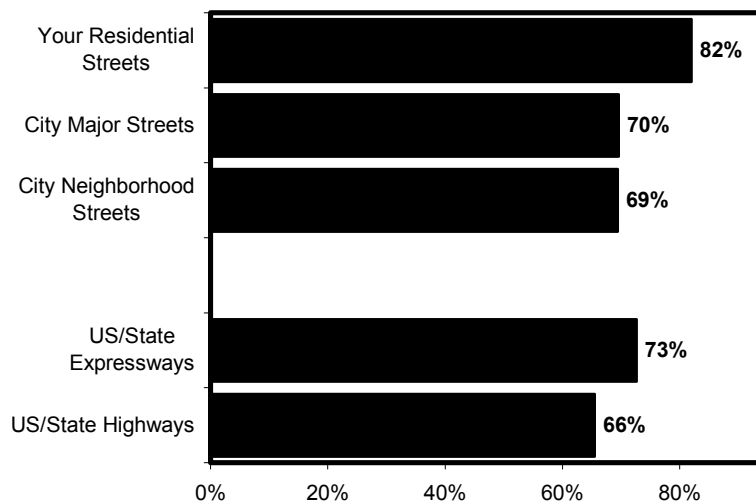
However, the trend data for responsiveness from 2008 to 2009 show a pronounced improvement of 7 percentage points. In fact, the result for 2009 was the second highest score in the eleven years in which this measure was included in the Memphis Poll.

⁷¹ The questions asked if the office was courteous *and attentive* during their call for service.

Street Maintenance Services

Street maintenance services are located within the Division of Public Works. Figure 14-4 provides the citizens' responses concerning street maintenance services.⁷² Citizens were asked if streets were well maintained and if potholes were patched within a reasonable time. The trend data for street maintenance services are provided in Figure 14-5. To differentiate between the responsibilities of the City and US/State, the questions regarding this category were specifically written to address the differences.

Figure 14-4: Street Maintenance by City and Other Governments' Responsibility



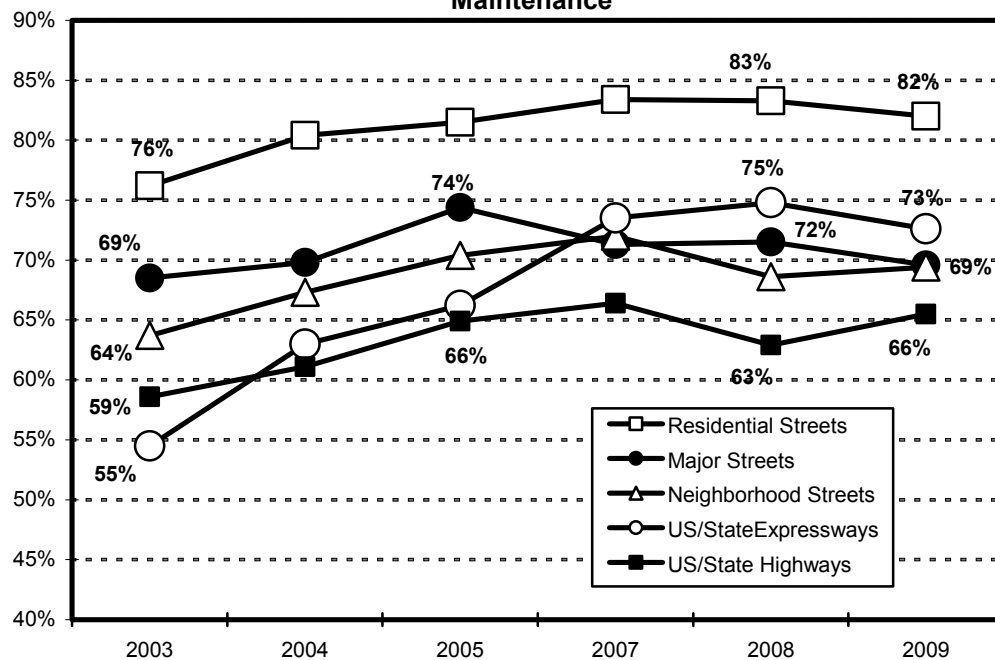
City Responsibility: The citizens were asked if they were satisfied with the maintenance of City streets in front of their houses, which were called residential streets. Eighty-two (82) percent of the citizens indicated that they were satisfied with the maintenance of their residential streets. These results were about the same as in 2008. However, the trend data show a 6 percentage-point improvement over the six years in which this question has been included.

Then citizens were asked if they were satisfied with the major streets that were the City's responsibility. The question cited specific streets such as Frayser Blvd, Walnut Grove Rd, Park Ave, Milbranch, Mendenhall, White Station, and Yale Rd. The Poll found that 70 percent were satisfied with these streets. The ratings for major streets were about the same as the 2007 Memphis Poll. Figure 14-5

⁷² The response rates for these questions were: residential streets (98 percent), major streets (90 percent), neighborhood streets (98 percent), US/State expressways (90 percent), and US/State highways (90 percent).

shows the trend line for major streets increased gradually from 2003 to 2005, decreased somewhat in 2007, and remained at approximately that level in 2009.

Figure 14-5: Citizen's Perceptions of Trends in Street Maintenance



Next, citizens were asked if their neighborhood streets were well maintained and 69 percent were satisfied with the City's performance. These results were the same as in 2008. The trend data show an 8 percentage-point improvement from 2003 to 2007, with a slight decline in 2008.

US/State Responsibility: Figure 14-4 shows that 73 percent of the citizens were satisfied with maintenance on the expressways. These results were about the same as in 2008. The long-term trends shows that the more recent results are considerably higher than in 2003 when this question was first asked.

The Memphis Poll also asked if US/State highways were well maintained. The question specifically cited examples such as Elvis Presley Blvd, Poplar Ave, Jackson Ave, Summer Ave, Lamar Ave, and Austin Peay Hwy. Sixty-six (66) percent of the citizens agreed that these highways were well maintained. This result was slightly higher than in 2008. The long-term trends shows that the more recent results are higher than in 2003 when this question was first asked.

Figure 14-6 provides an overall summary of the trends for streets that are the City's responsibility and US/State's responsibility. The data for the City date back to 1998, while the US/State data are only available since 2003.

Figure 14-6: Citizens' Perceptions of Street Maintenance Trends By Type of Governmental Unit

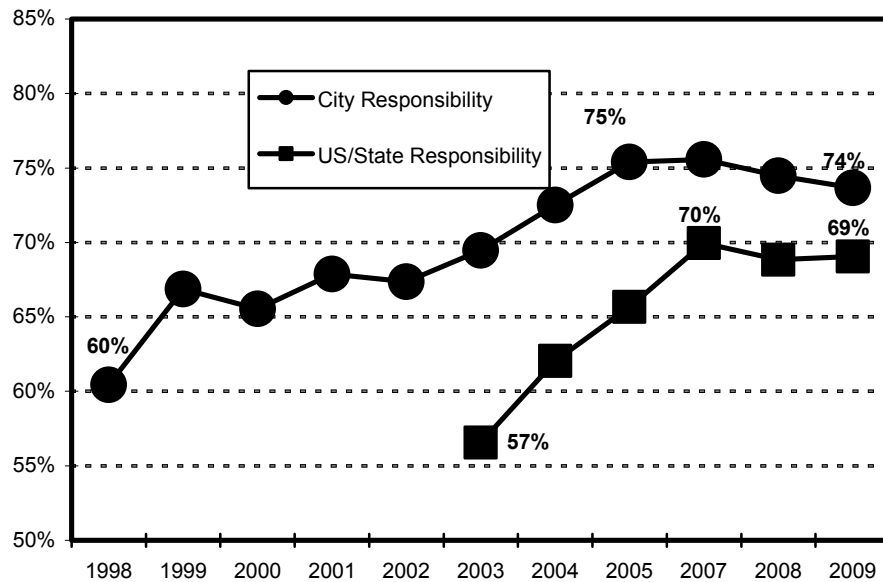


Figure 14-6 shows that the citizens were more satisfied with street maintenance that was the City's responsibility than the US/State's responsibility. The average score for the three types of streets that are the City's responsibility was 74 percent. In contrast, the average score for the highways that are US/State governments' responsibility was 69 percent. There was a very slight decline in both of these results from 2007. This change was very small, and the results over the last three years were mostly within the same narrow range.

Overall, these data show that there have been long-term improvements in street maintenance for each of the street types, whether City responsibility or US/State responsibility. The differences between street types that are the responsibility of the City and US/State have narrowed over time.⁷³

Contacting Street Maintenance Service

The Memphis Poll also examined interaction and responsiveness when the citizens contacted street maintenance about their concerns.

Figure 14-7 shows the ratings for interaction.⁷⁴ Seventy-six (76) percent of the citizens were satisfied with interaction when calling street maintenance about

⁷³ These findings should be compared to City priorities discussed in Chapter 3 which showed that street maintenance was rated as a far higher priority than building new roads and streets.

⁷⁴ Interaction refers to the citizens' ratings for phone professionalism and courteousness/attentiveness.

their concerns. This rating was below the average for the 80 percent approval rating of all City services. In addition, the ratings for interaction are problematic in that they declined by 15 percentage points from 2007 to 2009.

Figure 14-7: Street Contacting: Interaction and Responsiveness

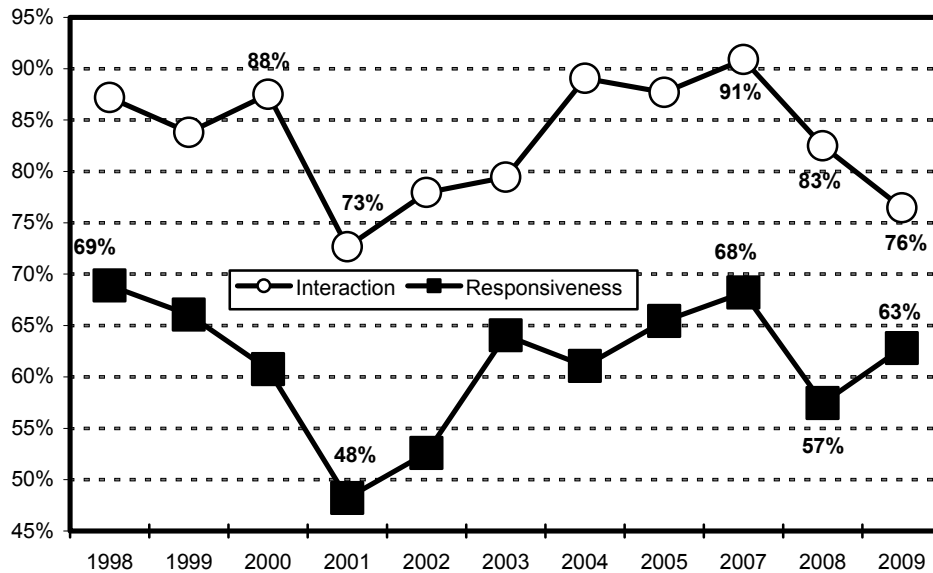


Figure 14-7 also shows the results for responsiveness, which were not as highly rated as interaction.⁷⁵ Only 63 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the responsiveness of street maintenance services. This was considerably lower than the 80 percent overall rating for City services. However, there was a 6 percentage-point improvement in responsiveness scores from 2008 to 2009.

Concerns about Physical Conditions

The Division of Public Works provides services related to physical conditions that have an impact on the quality of a neighborhood. These specific physical conditions include alley maintenance, streetlights, street drainage, pollution of rivers/streams, and tires. Monitoring and abating the pollution of rivers/streams is a function shared with the State of Tennessee and the Health Department.

This section provides a context for examining these conditions. Until 2001, citizens expressed few concerns about physical conditions. However, from that time to 2008, there were much higher levels of concerns. The findings in 2008 suggest declining citizens' concerns about these physical conditions. For display purposes, the results for these conditions are presented in separate figures.

⁷⁵ Responsiveness refers to the citizens' ratings for promptness and performance by solving the problems.

**Figure 14-8: Citizens' Concerns About Physical Conditions:
Maintenance of Alleys**

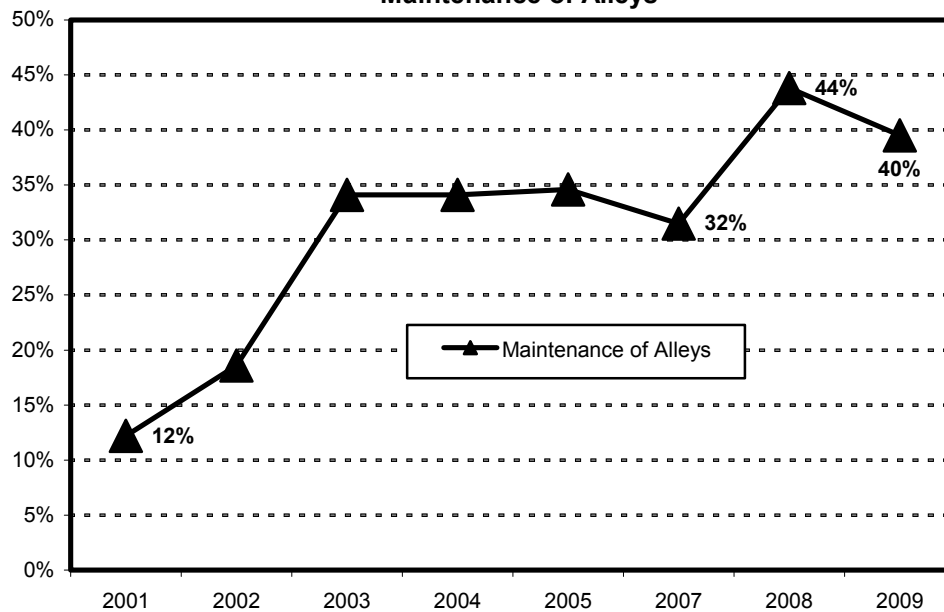


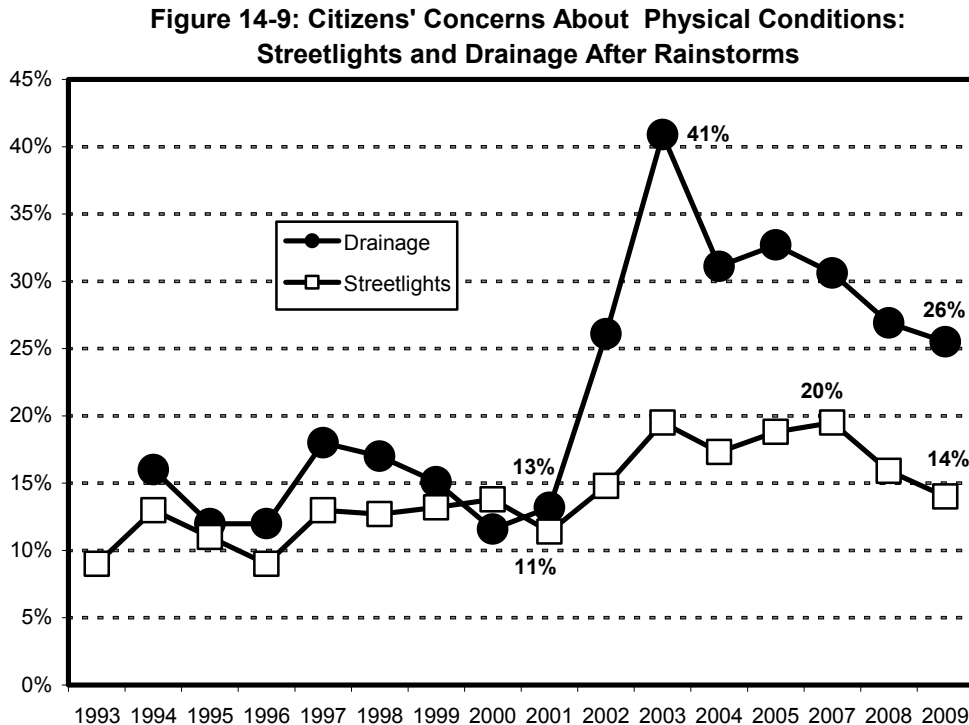
Figure 14-8 provides information about maintenance of City alleys. It shows that 40 percent of the citizens that responded to this question were concerned about the maintenance of alleys. This finding was a 4 percent-point improvement over 2008.

The ratings for 2008 and 2009 are an anomaly and need further explanation. The 2008 questionnaire added a prompt that discouraged responding if the citizens' neighborhood did not have alleys. The result was a lower response rate (only 31 percent this year) and a higher level of concern about alley maintenance. This higher level of concern in the last two years is not necessarily reflective of a growing problem, but rather, it is a more precise measurement of concern. However, as Figure 14-8 shows, maintenance of alleys is a greater concern than in 2001, when the question was first asked.

Additionally, data were examined for the three geographic areas with the highest response rates.⁷⁶ Concerns about alley maintenance were highest in Midtown and Downtown with 46 and 45 percent, respectively, followed by Southside with 36 percent.

⁷⁶ The highest response rates about alley maintenance were from citizens in Downtown with 47 percent, Midtown with 69 percent, and Southside with a response rate of 47 percent.

Figure 14-9 provides information about neighborhood streetlights.⁷⁷ Fourteen (14) percent of citizens considered streetlights a problem in their neighborhoods in 2009. Thus, streetlights are only very modest concerns for citizens. Compared to 2007, concerns about streetlights improved by 6 percentage points this year.⁷⁸



The Division of Public Works shares responsibility for drainage after rainstorms with the Division of Engineering.

Figure 14-9 also provides information about drainage after rainstorms.⁷⁹ Twenty-six (26) percent of the citizens were concerned about drainage after rainstorms. These results are a long-term improvement of 15 percentage points from 2003 to 2009. In contrast, the data for 2002 and 2003 showed large increases in concern because of the heavy rainstorms that hit the City. The data for 2004 through 2009 show a downturn in the levels of concern, although the results remain considerably higher than in earlier years.

The results for drainage after rainstorms displayed in Figure 14-10, show that the greatest concerns about drainage were in Midtown in both 2008 and 2009. Eastside had the second highest level of concerns. It also had an increased level

⁷⁷ The response rate for this question about streetlights was 98 percent.

⁷⁸ MLGW shares some responsibility for streetlights since they replace burned out light bulbs.

⁷⁹ The response rate for this question about drainage after rainstorms was 99 percent.

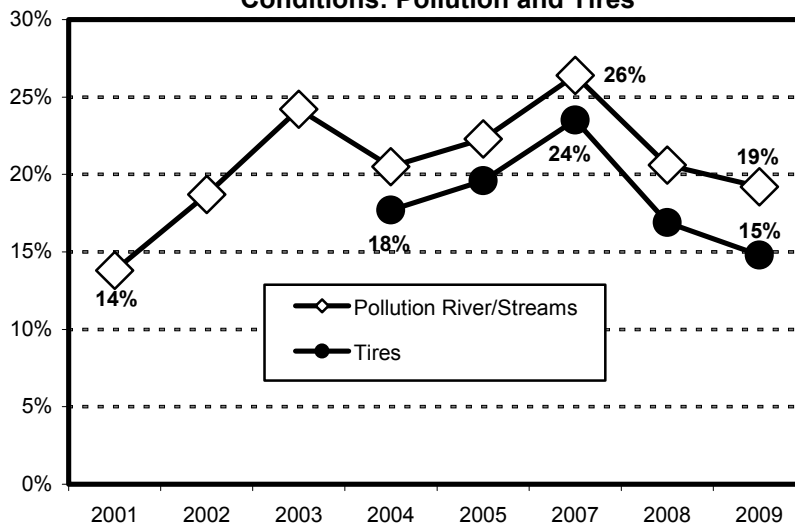
of concern—11 percentage points when comparing 2008 and 2009. In contrast, Northwest, Northside, and Southeast showed double-digit improvements in the scores from 2008 to 2009.

Figure 14-10: Concerns About Drainage after Rainstorms by Area of the City

Area	Concerns 2009	Concerns 2008	Change in 2009 from 2008
Midtown	41%	42%	1%
Eastside	37%	26%	-11%
Downtown	29%	26%	-3%
Southwest	29%	27%	-2%
Southside	26%	28%	3%
Southcentral	24%	17%	-7%
Northside	24%	34%	10%
Fareast	21%	19%	-2%
Northwest	18%	28%	11%
Northeast	17%	22%	5%
Southeast	16%	25%	10%

Figure 14-11 displays the trend data for concerns about the pollution of rivers and streams.⁸⁰ Only 19 percent of the citizens were concerned about this issue in 2009. There has been a modest increase in concern over time, from 14 percent in 2001 to 26 percent in 2007. However, the level of concern declined by 7 percentage points from 2007 to 2009.

Figure 14-11: Citizens' Concerns About Physical Conditions: Pollution and Tires



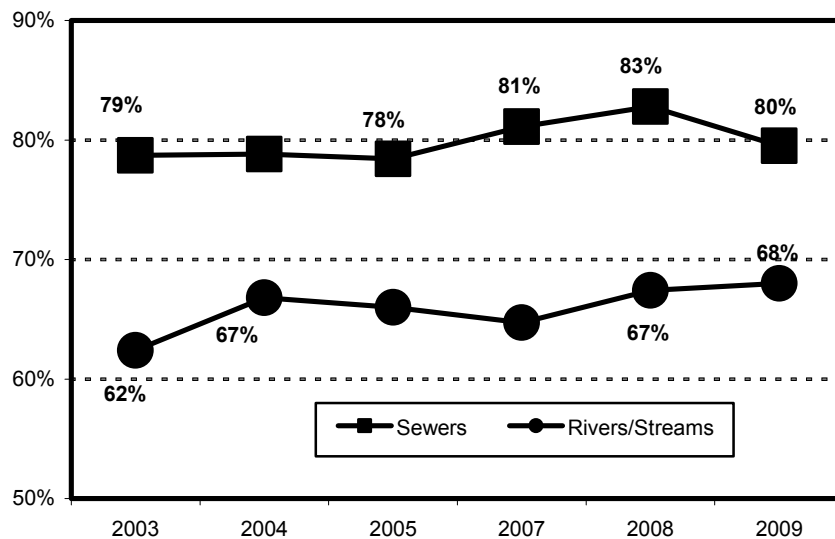
⁸⁰ The response rate for this question about rivers and streams was 82 percent.

Finally, the Memphis Poll asked if tires were left on neighborhood streets for more than two weeks.⁸¹ Figure 14-11 shows that only 15 percent of the citizens were concerned about tires left on neighborhood streets. This result was the lowest level of concern in the five years in which the Memphis Poll has asked this question. In addition, there was a 9 percentage-point improvement from 2007 to 2009.

Perceptions of Physical Conditions

The Memphis Poll asked about sewer maintenance and pollution abatement of rivers and streams⁸², which are services of the Division of Public Works.

Figure 14-12: Citizens' Perceptions of Maintaining Sewers and Improving Rivers/Streams



Specifically, citizens were asked if the City was doing a good job of maintaining the sewer system in the citizens' neighborhoods. Figure 14-12 shows that 80 percent agreed with this statement. These findings were in a consistent range throughout the years in which this information was collected. The rating was also identical to the average rating for all City services.

The Poll also asked if the City was doing a good job improving the quality of rivers and streams in the citizens' neighborhoods. This is a function that the Division of Public Works shares with the State of Tennessee and the Health Department. Figure 14-12 shows that 68 percent of citizens agreed that the City was addressing this problem, which was well below the overall average for City

⁸¹ The response rate for this question about tires was 98 percent.

⁸² The response rates to these questions were: sewers (96 percent) and rivers/streams (51 percent).

services. The data were generally consistent throughout the years of the Memphis Poll during which this information was collected.

Key Findings

- ❑ The findings for solid waste collection services were very impressive – service ratings were near all time highs in the history of the Memphis Poll.
- ❑ The ratings for uncontained waste and neatness showed large improvements over prior years.
- ❑ Citizens thought that most streets were better maintained in 2009 than in earlier years, although the results for the last three years were similar.
- ❑ Public Works is a major call center for concerns about solid waste pick up and street maintenance. Responsiveness, which is a combination of responding quickly and solving the problems, showed improvements when compared to 2008.
- ❑ However, interaction, which is phone professionalism and courtesy, declined substantially for street maintenance calls in the last two years.

Chapter 15

Division of Engineering

The Division of Engineering shares speeding on neighborhood streets and addressing the problems of drainage after rainstorms with other City agencies.

Speeding on Neighborhood Streets

Speeding on neighborhood streets is a shared responsibility between the Division of City Engineering (which can control speeding through street design and traffic calming devices)⁸³ and the Police Department.

The Memphis Poll has examined citizens' concerns about speeding on streets in their neighborhoods since the first Poll in 1993. Speeding on neighborhood streets can produce dangerous safety concerns.

Figure 15-1 shows increasing levels of concern about speeding on neighborhood streets from the first year of the Memphis Poll.⁸⁴ It shows that 42 percent of the citizens were concerned about speeding on neighborhood streets in 2009. This was a 9 percentage-point improvement from 2008.

There is no reason to believe that this change was due to City efforts, but rather might be due to two other factors. First, the long-term history of the trend chart shows that there were three previous one year periods where concern about speeding declined and then increased the following year.

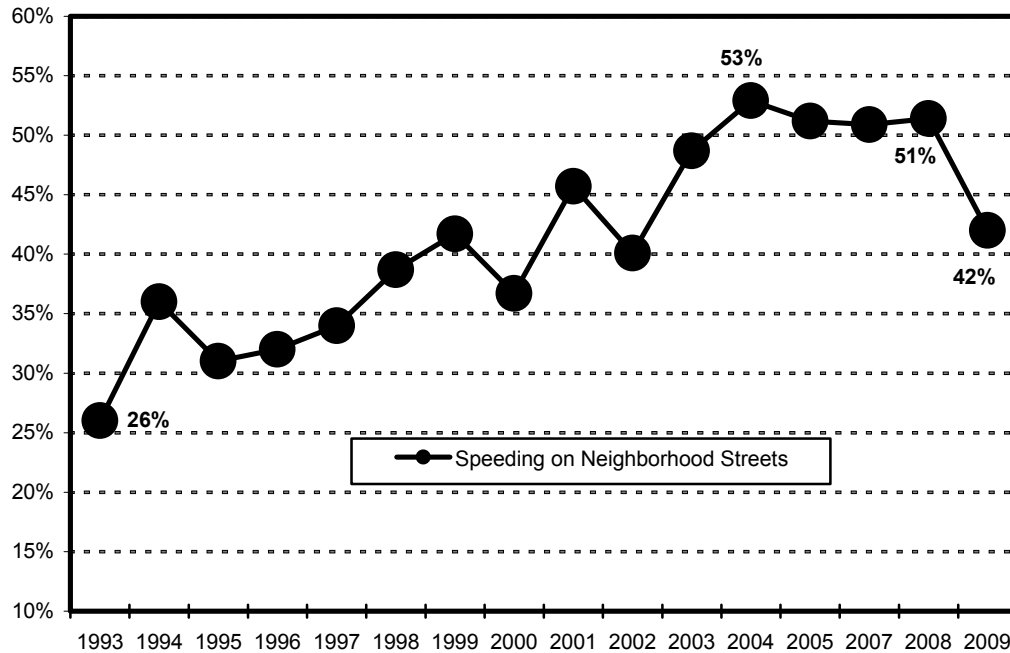
Second, there is a suggestion that citizens are driving less and that has produced lower levels of negative driving outcomes.⁸⁵ Citizens may be seeing less vehicular traffic in neighborhoods and slower driving to reduce the consumption of gasoline. Data gathered from the next Memphis Poll is needed to determine whether declining concerns about speeding are a longer term trend.

⁸³ In 2002, speeding on neighborhood streets was in a separate chapter for the Division of Engineering. After that it was placed in the Division of Police Services' chapter. However, the importance of this topic was lost in that chapter and although both divisions have responsibility for this problem, it appears that traffic engineering issues are more important in addressing speeding in Memphis.

⁸⁴ The response rate for this question about speeding was 100 percent.

⁸⁵ Tom Held, "Fatalities state highways decrease, following nation trend," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, January 1, 2009 suggests that reduced miles of driving due to increased cost of gas has a number of traffic outcomes.

Figure 15-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Speeding on Neighborhood Streets as a Problem



The Memphis Poll examined concerns about speeding on neighborhood streets by section of the City. Figure 15-2 shows that Northwest, Southcentral, and Eastside had the highest levels of concern about speeding in 2009.

Figure 15-2: Concerns About Speeding By Section of City

Areas	Concerns 2009	Concerns 2008	Change in 2009 from 2008
Northwest	55%	61%	-6%
Southcentral	50%	58%	-8%
Eastside	50%	52%	-2%
Southside	45%	46%	0%
Northside	43%	65%	-22%
Midtown	41%	48%	-6%
Southwest	38%	45%	-7%
Fareast	38%	59%	-22%
Northeast	38%	45%	-8%
Downtown	36%	56%	-20%
Southeast	36%	43%	-7%

The Northwest area also had high levels of concern in 2008. Concerns about speeding declined in all areas of the City between 2008 and 2009, with double

digit decreases in Northside, Fareast, and Downtown. Compared to other areas, Southeast had the lowest level of concerns about speeding in both 2008 and 2009.

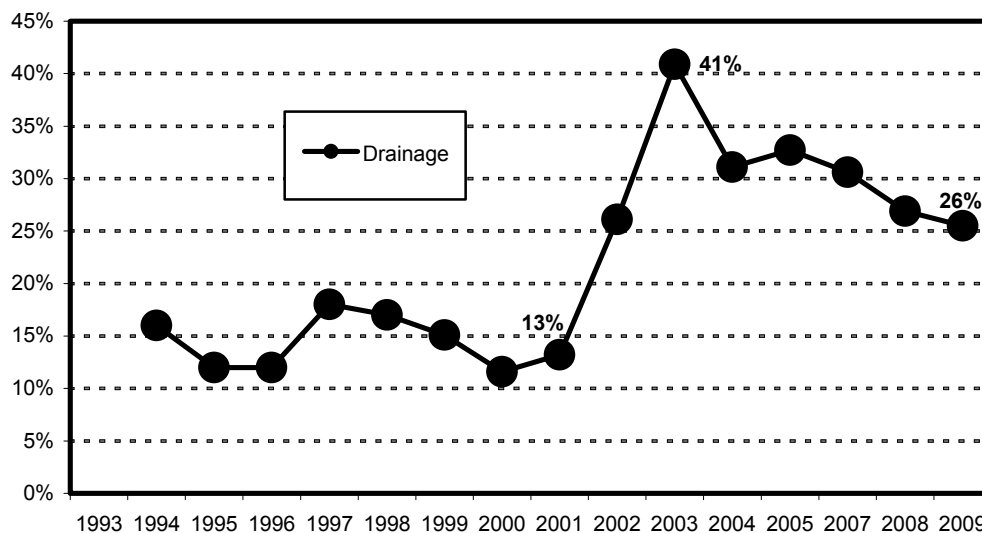
However, there are limitations to these findings. Speeding deals with neighborhood streets and does not indicate citizens' concerns about speeding on major streets or expressways in the City. Although speeding was identified as the most widespread neighborhood concern, in earlier years citizens did not rate the slowing of traffic speed on City streets as important as many other City priorities.⁸⁶

The reader should consult the 2002 Memphis Poll which included a broad analysis of speeding for the Department of Engineering. It found extensive speeding on an average day in the citizens' neighborhoods and identified the source (residential, business, schools start/end times, and cut through traffic) of speeding vehicles. The citizens did not support lowering speed limits.⁸⁷

Drainage After Rainstorms

The Division of Engineering shares responsibility for drainage after rainstorms with the Division of Public Works.

Figure 15-3: Citizens' Concerns About Drainage After Rainstorms



⁸⁶ See the 2004 Memphis Poll for information on the lower priority that citizens attach to abating speeding on neighborhood streets.

⁸⁷ See the 2002 Memphis Poll for these results.

Figure 15-3 provides information about drainage after rainstorms.⁸⁸ Twenty-six (26) percent of the citizens were concerned about drainage after rainstorms. These results are a long-term improvement of 15 percentage points from 2003 to 2009. In contrast, the data for 2002 and 2003 showed large increases in concern because of the heavy rainstorms that hit the City. The data for 2004 through 2009 show a downturn in the levels of concern, although the results remain considerably higher than in earlier years.

The results for drainage after rainstorms displayed in Figure 15-4, show that the greatest concerns about drainage were in Midtown in both 2008 and 2009. Eastside had the second highest level of concerns. It also had an increased level of concern—11 percentage points when comparing 2008 and 2009. In contrast, Northwest, Northside, and Southeast showed double-digit improvements in the scores from 2008 to 2009.

Figure 15-4: Concerns About Drainage after Rainstorms by Area of the City

Area	Concerns 2009	Concerns 2008	Change in 2009 from 2008
Midtown	41%	42%	1%
Eastside	37%	26%	-11%
Downtown	29%	26%	-3%
Southwest	29%	27%	-2%
Southside	26%	28%	3%
Southcentral	24%	17%	-7%
Northside	24%	34%	10%
Fareast	21%	19%	-2%
Northwest	18%	28%	11%
Northeast	17%	22%	5%
Southeast	16%	25%	10%

⁸⁸ The response rate for this question about drainage after rainstorms was 99 percent.

Key Findings

- ❑ Citizens were less concerned about speeding on neighborhood streets in 2009 than in 2008.
- ❑ Factors, such as the price of gasoline, related to the amount of driving may be responsible for these changes.
- ❑ Citizens have seen improvements in their concerns about drainage after rainstorms since 2003. However, these remain higher concerns than before 2002.
- ❑ Midtown has the highest levels of concerns about drainage after rainstorms.

Chapter 16

Memphis and Shelby County

Health Department

The Memphis and Shelby County Health Department (called Health Department in this report) is a joint City and County agency administered by the County. The City provides approximately half of the funding for the Health Department.⁸⁹ The Health Department has an extensive mandate that includes providing environmental protection to the community, improving sanitation practices, and delivering health-related services. The health clinics were formerly administered by the Health Department, but have now been moved to the MED, which is the Shelby County public hospital. Although the health clinics are no longer within the purview of the Health Department, the Memphis Poll continues to ask citizens about these important services.

Figure 16-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Health Department and Health Clinics

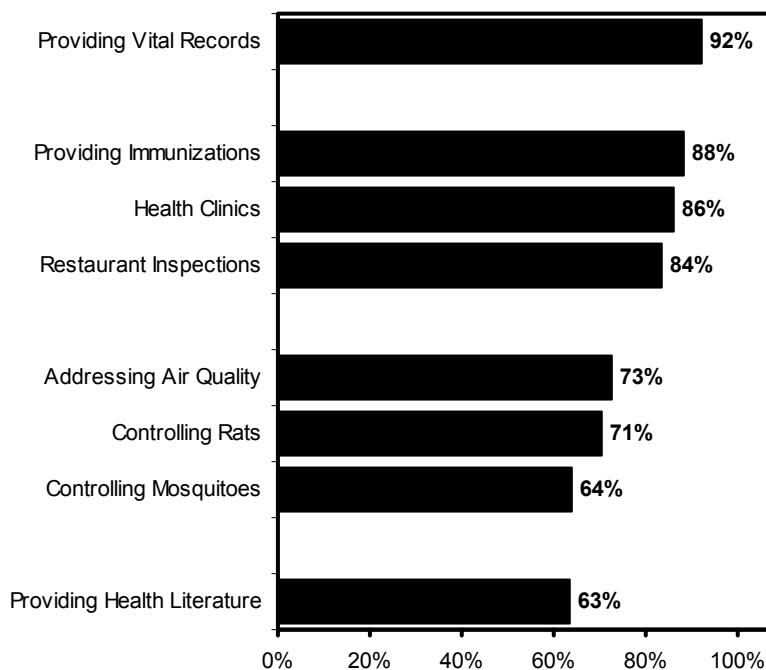


Figure 16-1 shows the results for the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department and the health clinics.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ At the time of this report, the Memphis City Council was considering reducing or eliminating its share of funding for the Health Department.

⁹⁰ The response rates for these questions were: providing vital records (79 percent), providing immunizations (71 percent), providing health clinics (72 percent), restaurant inspections (91 percent),

The highest tier of Health Department services in Figure 16-1 consists of providing vital records (such as birth and death certificates). Ninety-two (92) percent of the citizens felt the Health Department was doing a good job in providing vital records. This score made providing vital records one of the City's elite services.

The second tier services were above 80 percent, the average score for City services. The ratings were 88 percent for providing immunizations, 86 percent for health clinics, and 84 percent for restaurant inspections. This tier of Health Department services compares favorably with many services delivered directly by the City of Memphis.

The third tier of services was below average when compared to the overall rating for City services. Seventy-three (73) percent of the citizens were satisfied with addressing air quality, 71 percent were satisfied with controlling rats, and 64 percent were satisfied with controlling mosquitoes.

The lowest tier of Health Department services was far below average and included a single service: providing health education and disease prevention literature (63 percent).

Trend Data for Health Department

The Health Department is responsible for controlling rats. Figure 16-2 shows that the 2009 score of 71 percent was in approximately the same range for the last four years of the Memphis Poll. That result is far below the overall average score of 80 percent for all City services and much lower than the high score of 84 percent in 2002.

The Health Department is also responsible for controlling mosquitoes.⁹¹ The Health Department feels that it has one of the nation's best programs, but the job

addressing air quality (88 percent), controlling rats (95 percent), controlling mosquitoes (97 percent), and providing health literature (80 percent).

⁹¹ The question specifically asked citizens about controlling mosquitoes and it did not ask about eliminating mosquitoes. According to the Health Department website, controlling mosquitoes and rats is part of its mission: http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/FirstPortal/appmanager/scexternal/content?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=GovLevel4PortalPage&contentsselected=%2FdotContent%2FGovernment%2FCountyServices%2FHealthServices%2FEnvironmentalHealth%2Findex.htm&PortletName=Home.Government.CountyServices.HealthServices.EnvironmentalHealth
<http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/FirstPortal/dotShowDoc/http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/FirstPortal/dotSh>

of controlling mosquitoes is difficult given environmental and health conditions in Memphis.

Figure 16-2: Citizens' Perceptions of Controlling Rats & Mosquitoes

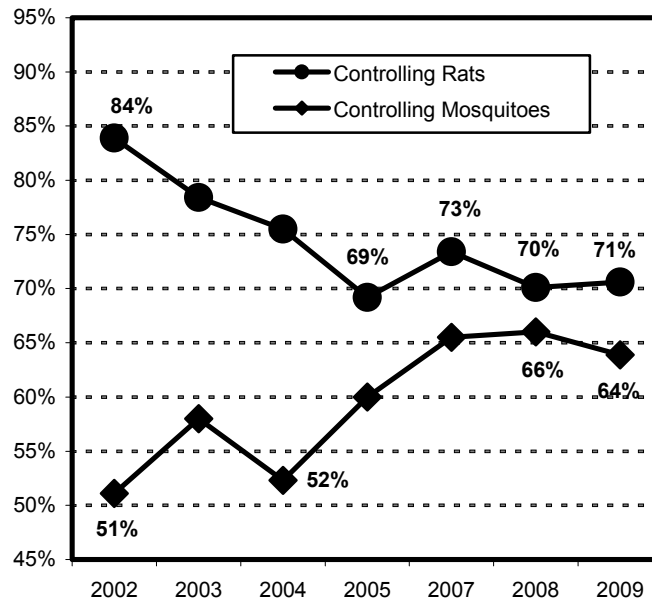


Figure 16-2 shows citizens' perceptions of the department's efforts to control mosquitoes. The rating of 64 percent is at the level of the last three years of the Memphis Poll, and the results are considerably lower than the 80 percent average score for all City services. Unlike controlling rats, controlling mosquitoes has improved over time from a low of 51 percent in 2002 to 64 percent in 2009.

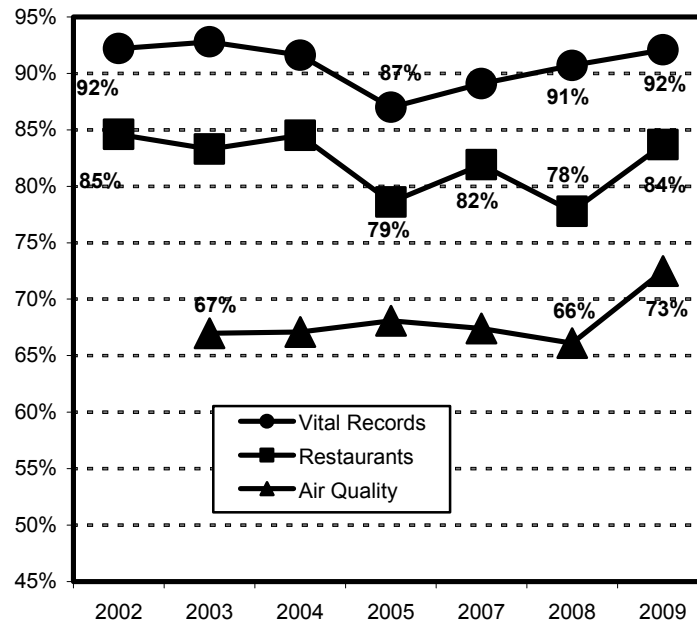
The Memphis Poll next examined citizens' perceptions of providing vital records. According to the website for this office, "The Tennessee Office of Vital Records registers and maintains the original certificates of births, deaths, marriages and divorces that occur in Tennessee. Certified copies of the original records are available to the person named on the record and to certain family members or legal representatives through the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department's Vital Records Office. This makes it possible for the local Vital Records office to electronically issue birth certificates for all persons born in the State of Tennessee from 1949 to present."⁹²

owDoc/dotContent/Government/CountyServices/HealthServices/EnvironmentalHealth/vectorfee_index.htm

⁹²http://www.shelbycountyn.tn.gov/FirstPortal/dotShowDoc//dotContent/Government/CountyServices/HealthServices/AdministrativeServices/birth_cert.htm

The trends for the vital records office are displayed in Figure 16-3. The score in 2009 was 92 percent, making it one of the elite services in the Memphis Poll. Historically, its trend line has been near 90 percent, and for many years it has exceeded this benchmark. Citizens are very satisfied with the efforts of the vital records office.

Figure 16-3: Citizens' Perceptions of Providing Vital Records, Restaurant Inspections, and Addressing Air Quality



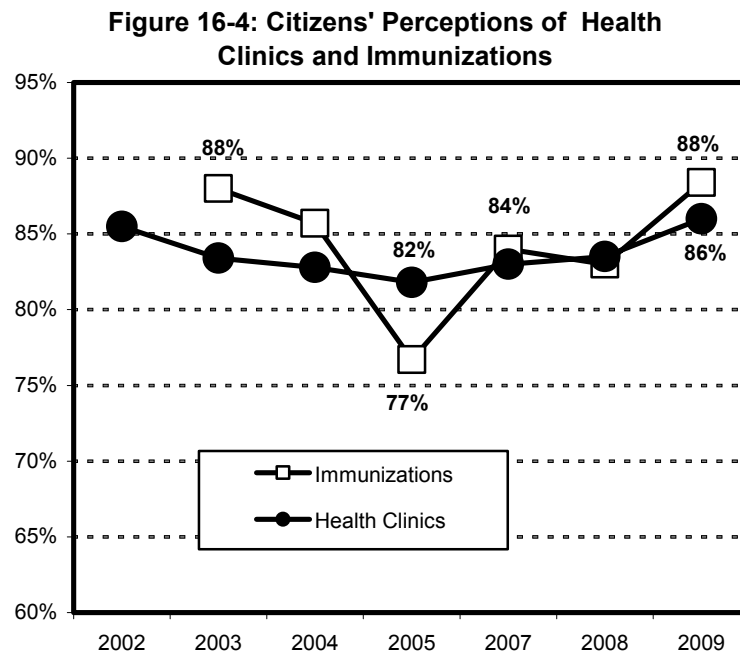
In addition, the Health Department inspects restaurants. According to the State of Tennessee website, "All of our state's nearly 8,000 retail establishments that sell food are required by State law to be inspected at least once every six months to insure compliance with all laws and regulations relating to food storage, facility sanitation and safety. Scores only provide a general indication of compliance; inspection reports better describe sanitation conditions and associated health risks and must be made available by the store to anyone requesting it. A score below 70 requires a follow-up inspection. Compliance standards are related primarily to: food protection and temperature, employee hygiene, water and sewage services, toilet and hand washing facilities, waste disposal, pest control, cleaning and sanitizing of food equipment and utensils, maintenance of floors, walls, and ceilings, sufficient lighting and ventilation, and proper storage and display of toxic materials."⁹³

⁹³ <http://www.tennessee.gov/agriculture/regulatory/foodstores.html>

Figure 16-3 shows the scores for restaurant inspections. The 84 percent rating in 2009 was a 6 percentage-point improvement over 2008. This places the rating in the same high range as it was between 2002 and 2004. It is also above the average score of 80 percent for all City services.

The Health Department is also involved in addressing air quality. According to the department's website, the mission of this program is to "establish air emission standards and requirements to monitor air pollution sources through the issuance of construction and operating permits. Other duties include conducting source visits and compliance inspections, developing enforcement cases on violations of the regulations, monitoring local ambient air quality, performing and observing stack tests, and collecting and disseminating information relative to the control of air pollution."⁹⁴

Figure 16-3 depicts the citizens' perceptions of addressing air quality. The 2009 results for air quality are a 7 percentage-point improvement over the 2008 scores. However, the 73 percent score was below the 80 percent overall average for City services.



The administration of health clinics moved from the Health Department to the public hospital, The Regional Medical Center, which is called The MED. According to the MED's website, "Health Loop is a group of ten community

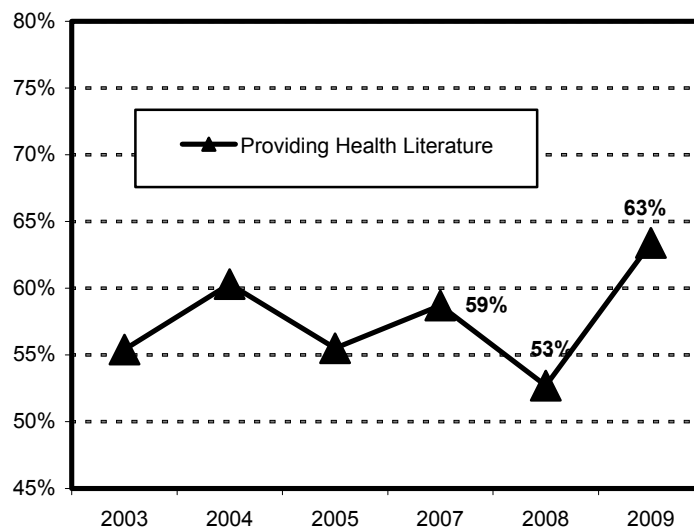
⁹⁴http://www.shelbycountyttn.gov/FirstPortal/dotShowDoc/Government/CountyServices/HealthServices/EnvironmentalHealth/air_pollutionindex.htm

based clinics managed by The Regional Medical Center at Memphis (The MED).⁹⁵ This primary care network has more than 60,000 patient visits per year. Health Loop offers: medical services by appointment, walk-in services and extended hours, and interpreter services. Health Loop patients are connected to the specialized services of The MED through the Shelby County Health Care Network, which includes the Memphis and Shelby County Health Department.”⁹⁶

The Poll continues to ask citizens to rate their satisfaction with the quality of health care at the health clinics. Specifically, the question dealt with providing quality health care at the Health Loop clinics, also called public clinics or Health Department clinics. Figure 16-4 shows the ratings have been in the same narrow 82 to 86 percent range in the years in which the question has been asked. With a rating of 86 percent, health clinics remain above the average for overall City services.

The Health Department provides immunizations and immunization records. Figure 16-4 provides trend information in the years for which the Memphis Poll has examined this service. The 2009 score of 88 percent is a 5 percentage-point improvement over 2008, and is equal to the highest score, set in 2003, for this service. In addition, the score is well above the 80 percent average score for all City services.

Figure 16-5: Citizens' Perceptions of Providing Health Literature



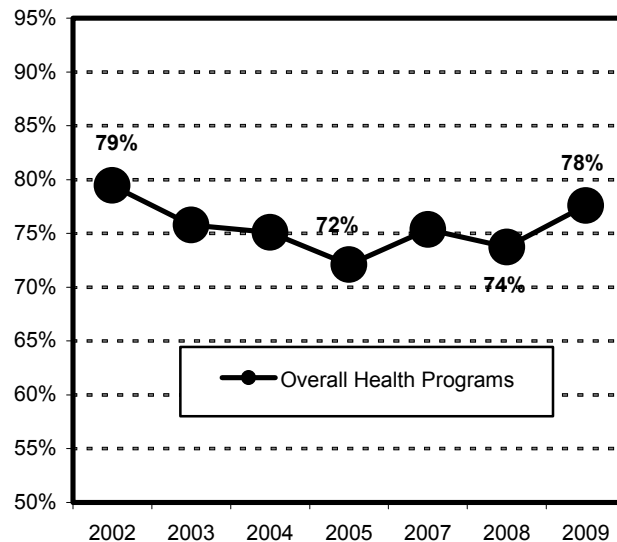
⁹⁵ At the time of this report, a consultant was recommending that the MED eliminate the health clinics.

⁹⁶ <http://www.the-med.org/hphealthloop.html>

The Health Department also distributes health education and disease prevention literature. Figure 16-5 shows the 2009 ratings were a 10 percentage-point improvement over 2008. It was also the highest score in the six years in which this question was asked. However, at 63 percent, providing health literature is well below the 80 percent overall average for City services.

Finally, Figure 16-6 shows the average score for all of the combined health services. These services included both the Health Department services and the health clinics. The results confirm the findings of the individual trend lines — overall the services of the Health Department improved by 4 percentage points from 2008 to 2009. The 78 percent overall score for health programs is slightly below the 80 percent overall average for City services.

Figure 16-6: Citizens' Perceptions of Health Programs



Key Findings

- ❑ The average score for all Health Department services improved in 2009 and is very near the 2002 highest score.
- ❑ Services that showed improvement were providing health literature, immunizations, improving air quality, restaurant inspections, and health clinics.
- ❑ Services with similar or lower scores in 2009 were controlling rats and mosquitoes, both of which rated below the average of all City services.
- ❑ Providing vital records is among the City's elite services.

Chapter 17

Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division

Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division⁹⁷ (MLGW) is a division of the City of Memphis, even though it has an independent board.⁹⁸ Mayor W.W. Herenton has made efforts to incorporate the division into the City's administrative structure. The 2003 Memphis Poll included questions about MLGW for the first time.

The findings for MLGW are more complicated than most divisions, because industry-wide surveys done by J.D. Powers and Associates rank MLGW compared to other utilities. The J. D. Powers and Associates' surveys provide overall results, but not the specific detailed data found in this chapter of the Memphis Poll. Powers and Associates surveys both residential customers and business customers, while the Memphis Poll surveys residential households. The Powers and Associates' surveys solicit information of customers beyond the City boundary, while the Memphis Poll focuses on residents within the City of Memphis. Having made these comments, there are similarities and differences in the two sets of polling data, which will be highlighted throughout this chapter.

Figure 17-1 shows citizens' perceptions of MLGW services in 2009.⁹⁹ The highest tier shows three service measures were rated very highly: the courtesy of field workers in the citizens' neighborhoods (92 percent), the quality of drinking water (91 percent), and the reliability of utilities (90 percent).¹⁰⁰ These services rank among the City's elite services.

Figure 17-2 shows that the results have been consistently high for all five years in which the Memphis Poll has examined field workers and drinking water. The ratings have consistently been at or slightly above 90 percent. There is not a

⁹⁷ This is the name the division uses in its public website and other public relations.

⁹⁸ Jerry Collins, President of MLGW, addressed some of the issues in this chapter: "MLGW takes customer service seriously," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 26, 2009.

⁹⁹ The response rates for these questions were: field workers (91 percent), drinking water (99 percent), reliability of utilities (98 percent), emergencies (91 percent), tree trimming (93 percent), and cost of utilities (98 percent).

¹⁰⁰ The Memphis Poll ratings are for residential customers in the City of Memphis. A survey of commercial customers, including those outside the City, by J.D. Powers and Associates showed that MLGW was ranked 90 out of 90 other utilities by business customers. Our data suggests a much higher ranking by the residential customers within the City of Memphis, including some very high ratings that place three services among the elite of City services. Daniel Connolly, "MLGW ranks last in customer-satisfaction survey," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 5, 2009.

trend chart for reliability of utilities since this is the first year this question has been asked.

Figure 17-1: Citizens' Perceptions of Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division (MLGW)

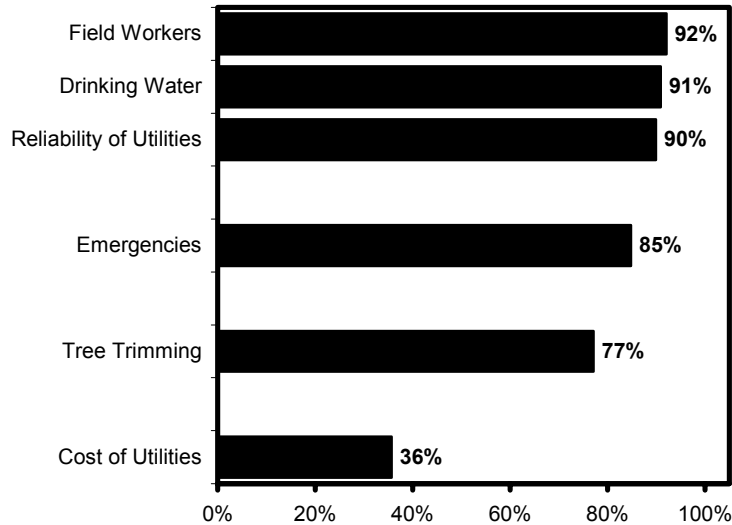


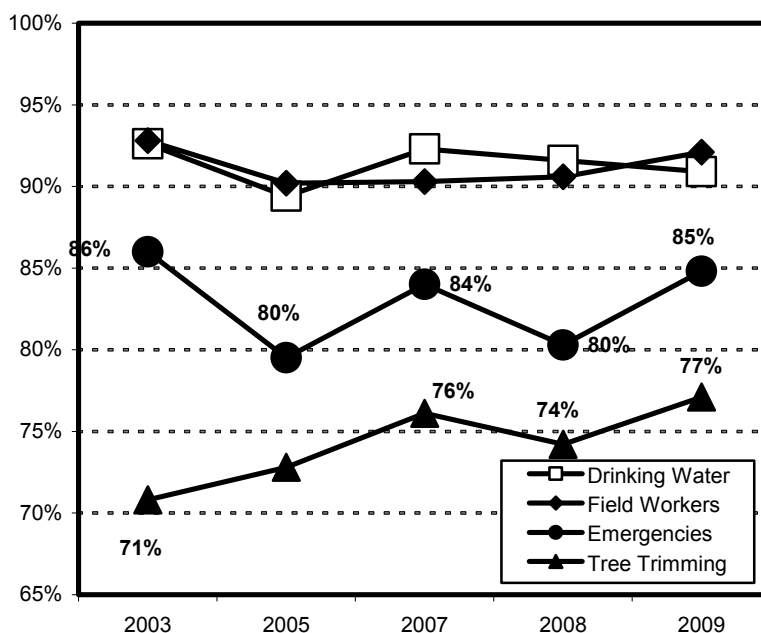
Figure 17-1 displays in the second tier that 85 percent of the citizens thought MLGW was doing a good job of responding to gas and electric emergencies in their neighborhoods. This result is above the 80 percent average for City services. Figure 17-2 shows that the scores for responding to emergencies have fluctuated in a range of 80 to 86 percent and it is now near the higher level.

February 2008 and its aftermath was a difficult time for the Southeast section of Memphis. A tornado tore through the area and demolished homes and businesses. It also rendered the Hickory Hill shopping mall a shell of its former self.

Figure 17-3 provides an interesting perspective on this event. The ratings for emergencies were examined by sections of the City. The Southeast area had the fourth highest rating and it was only 3 percentage points from the top rating. It was 10 percentage points above the lowest rating which was 77 percent.

Overall, these findings suggest that citizens from the Hickory Hill area were satisfied with MLGW's response to this emergency.

Figure 17-2: Citizens' Perceptions of Selected MLGW Services



The third tier had one service that was slightly below the average for all City services. Figure 17-1 shows that 77 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the utility's tree trimming service. Figure 17-2 shows that this finding was about the same in 2007 and a little higher than in 2008.

Figure 17-3: Citizens' Perceptions of MLGW's Responding to Emergenies By Sections of the City

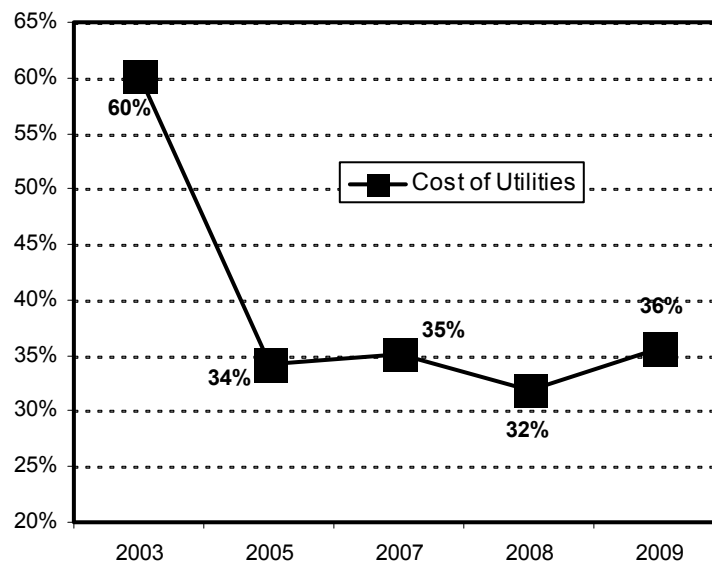
Areas	Percent 2009
Fareast	90%
Northside	89%
Northwest	88%
Southeast	87%
Downtown	86%
Southside	86%
Midtown	84%
Northeast	84%
Southwest	82%
Eastside	80%
Southcentral	77%
Overall Rating	85%

In sharp contrast, citizens showed a lack of confidence in MLGW's cost of utilities. Figure 17-1 shows that only 36 percent were satisfied with this service.

That result places the cost of utilities as the lowest-rated service in the 2009 Memphis Poll.

Citizens' perceptions of costs are important to the division and MLGW says that it delivers some of the lowest electricity rates in the county.¹⁰¹ According to the MLGW website, "Since 1939, MLGW has met the utility needs of Memphis and Shelby County residents by delivering reliable and affordable electricity, natural gas and water service."¹⁰²

Figure 17-4: Citizens' Perceptions of MLGW's Performance in Cost of Utilities



¹⁰¹ The following statement, printed verbatim in this footnote, was found on the MLGW website at http://mlgw.com/SubView.php?key=about_newsreleases&chunkid=227: 2008-03-11 Jacksonville survey shows MLGW rates among lowest in the nation. A 2009 Jacksonville Energy Authority (JEA) survey of residential electric rates from 55 public and private utilities shows that MLGW customers pay some of the lowest rates in the nation. Of the 55 utilities surveyed, MLGW rates were the ninth lowest. The survey compared the cost for 1,000 kilowatts of electricity (a universal standard of measure), and not average utility bills. The complete survey can be found at www.mlgw.com/newsroom. MLGW customers pay \$77.37 per 1,000 kilowatts, about \$20.00 less than JEA customers. Other cities with higher electric rates than MLGW include Chattanooga, Tucson, Atlanta, Salt Lake City, Miami, Chicago, Los Angeles, Milwaukee, Sacramento, Las Vegas, Baltimore, San Diego, and Philadelphia. Fairbanks, Alaska residents have the highest cost of cities surveyed, paying \$178.07 per 1,000 kilowatts. AmerenUE customers in St. Louis have the lowest cost, at \$58.85 per 1,000 kilowatts. "There are few cities that can say they have lower electric rates than ours. That is something that every Memphian should be aware of and proud to say," said Jerry Collins, MLGW president and CEO. "While energy costs have risen nationwide in recent years, this shows that MLGW is doing a good job of controlling the impact to the customer." While MLGW rates are among the lowest in the nation, weather and customer usage have the strongest impact on customer bills. Customers can help control their usage and costs by practicing smart energy conservation. MLGW offers several tools to help customers use energy wisely.

¹⁰² http://www.mlgw.com/SubView.php?key=about_ourutilservices. This statement suggests that the 2009 Memphis Poll will include a question about the priority citizens attach to public utilities.

Figure 17-4 provides trend information about the cost of utilities. In 2003, 60 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the cost of utilities. That result plunged to 34 in 2005 and has remained at that level for the last four years of the Poll.¹⁰³

The results show that African Americans were more concerned than whites about the cost of utilities—a 16 percentage-point difference. African Americans in general have a lower median income than whites.¹⁰⁴

**Figure 17-5: Citizens' Perceptions of
MLGW's Performance in Cost of Utilities by
Section of City**

Areas	Percent 2009
Eastside	50%
Fareast	44%
Southeast	41%
Northeast	38%
Midtown	36%
Southside	36%
Northside	34%
Downtown	33%
Northwest	27%
Southwest	26%
Southcentral	18%
Overall Rating	36%
Response Rate	98%

In addition, the Memphis Poll examined the cost of utilities by section of the City. Figure 17-5 shows that Eastside had the highest positive score at 50 percent, followed by the Fareast with 44 percent. Southcentral had the lowest score with 18 percent satisfaction. Even in the most affluent areas of Eastside and Fareast, half or more of the citizens did not feel that MLGW was doing a good job on the cost of utilities.

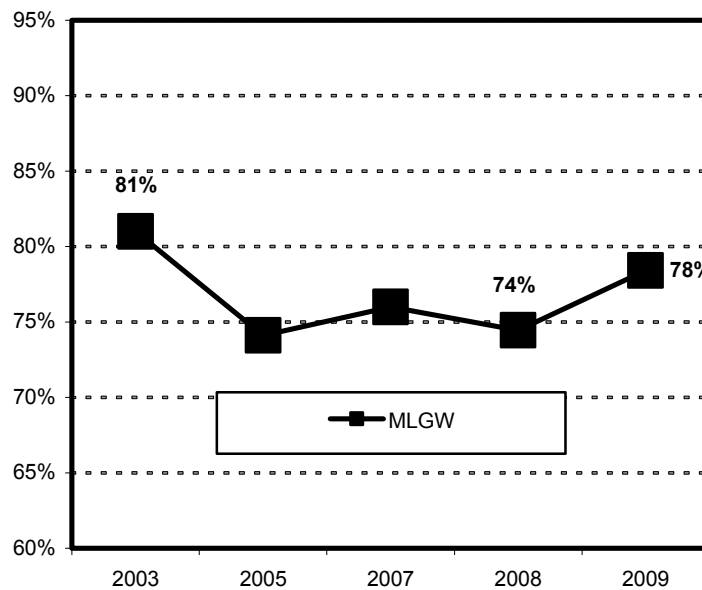
Finally, Figure 17-6 provides an average score of 78 percent for the six services: field workers, drinking water, reliability of utilities, emergencies, tree trimming,

¹⁰³ MLGW sponsored a rent ordinance change that requires landlords to maintain their property against energy losses. The overall impact should reduce the cost of utilities to some renters. Daniel Connolly, "New Memphis law requires rental properties be more energy-efficient," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 4, 2009.

¹⁰⁴ According to the 2000 census, median income in Memphis was \$41,112 for whites and \$26,860 for African Americans. According to the 2000 census, the percent below the poverty level in Memphis was 8.9 percent for whites and 27.1 percent for African Americans.

and cost of utilities. Excluding the new question on reliability of utilities, the rating for 2009 was a 2 percentage-point improvement over 2008.¹⁰⁵ Another 2 percentage points were due to the addition of the new question. The conclusion is that in the last four years, the scores were flat and within a narrow range of 74 percent to 76 percent. These scores are below the overall approval rating for City services, while the score in 2003 was somewhat higher at 81 percent.

Figure 17-6: Overall Average Scores for MLGW Services



Contacting MLGW

The Memphis Poll also asked if citizens had contacted MLGW. A substantial 36 percent of citizens contacted MLGW, which made it the most contacted City division. The size of its customer base is described on the MLGW website: “Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division is the nation’s largest three-service municipal utility, serving more than 420,000 customers.”¹⁰⁶

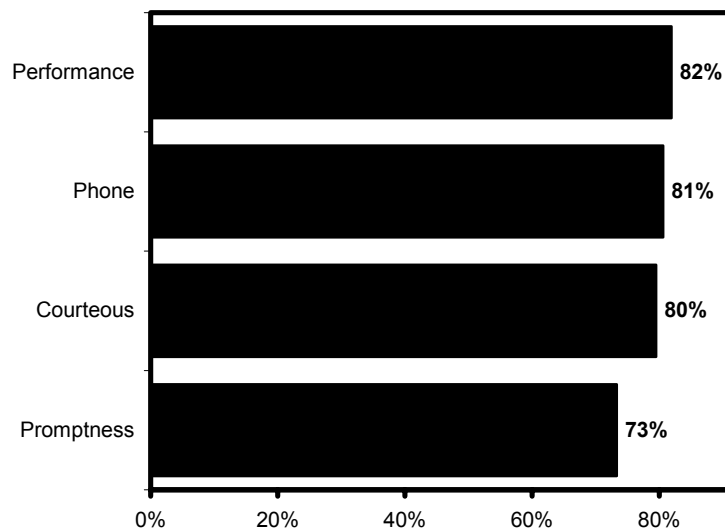
¹⁰⁵ The J.D. Powers and Associates survey seemed to show a 15 percent-point improvement in residential customer satisfaction between 2007 and 2008. Our survey did not find any improvement during that time period. The J.D. Powers study draws from all customers and not just City of Memphis customers. In addition, specific data that could be compared was not available from J.D. Powers and Associates. The J.D. Powers and Associates survey also suggested that MLGW was the lowest-rated utility in the South.

http://www.mlgw.com/SubView.php?key=about_newsreleases&chunkid=251

¹⁰⁶ http://www.mlgw.com/SubView.php?key=about_ourutilservices. This figure includes customers outside of Memphis.

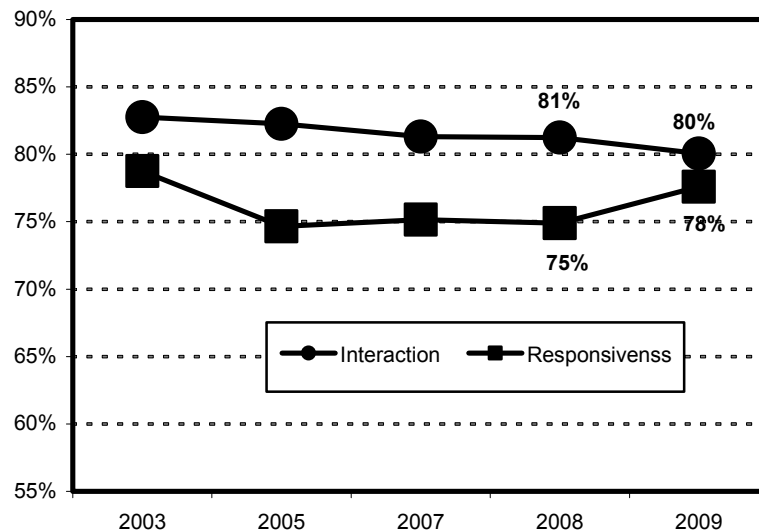
Figure 17-7 shows the quality of that contacting experience from the citizens' perspectives. The citizens' ratings were 82 percent for performance by solving the problem, 81 percent for phone professionalism, 80 percent for courtesy, and 73 percent for promptness. Whites were less positive about MLGW courtesy than African Americans were.

**Figure 17-7: Citizens' Perceptions of Contacting
Memphis Light, Gas and Water**



The trends for interaction and responsiveness are displayed in Figure 17-8. Interaction is the average of phone professionalism and courteousness¹⁰⁷, while responsiveness is the average of performance and promptness.

**Figure 17-8: Citizens' Perceptions of MLGW's
Interaction and Responsiveness**

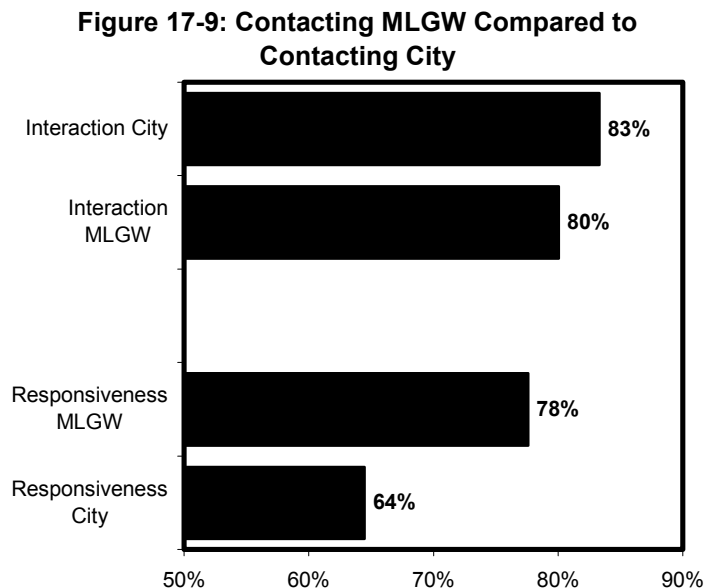


¹⁰⁷ The questions asked if the office was courteous *and attentive* during their call for service.

The scores for interaction are very consistent over the five years of the Memphis Poll in which these questions have been asked. The scores are at or over 80 percent, and near the overall approval ratings of all City services. The ratings for responsiveness have been consistently at the 75 to 78 percent range from 2005 to 2009, with this year's score very close to the high of 79 percent in 2003.

As shown in Figure 17-9, the City's ratings were slightly higher for interaction—83 percent compared to 80 percent for MLGW.

In contrast, MLGW received considerably higher ratings for responsiveness—78 percent compared to 64 percent for the City's conventional services discussed in Chapter 18. The findings suggest MLGW is far more effective in its responsiveness to citizens' requests than the City's conventional agencies.¹⁰⁸



¹⁰⁸ A MLGW official was quoted in a newspaper article that "Our reliability (at the call center) is extremely good relative to other utilities, but our customers don't think so," In fact, the customers in the City of Memphis replying to the Memphis Poll thought the utility was doing a good job according to figure 17-9. Its scores for interaction were slightly lower than the score for the City agencies. However, its scores for responsiveness were much higher than the scores for City agencies. Daniel Connolly, "Quality push is on for customer satisfaction at MLGW," *Memphis Commercial Appeal*, February 10, 2009.

Key Findings

- ❑ MLGW offers three of the City's elite services: the courtesy of the field workers, providing quality drinking water, and reliability of utilities.
- ❑ Citizens felt that MLGW did a better job than other City divisions in responsiveness—responding to calls more promptly and solving the problem.
- ❑ One of the stunning findings in the 2009 Memphis Poll was the exceptionally low rating for citizens' satisfaction with the cost of utilities provided by MLGW—this was only partially due to socioeconomic factors.

Chapter 18

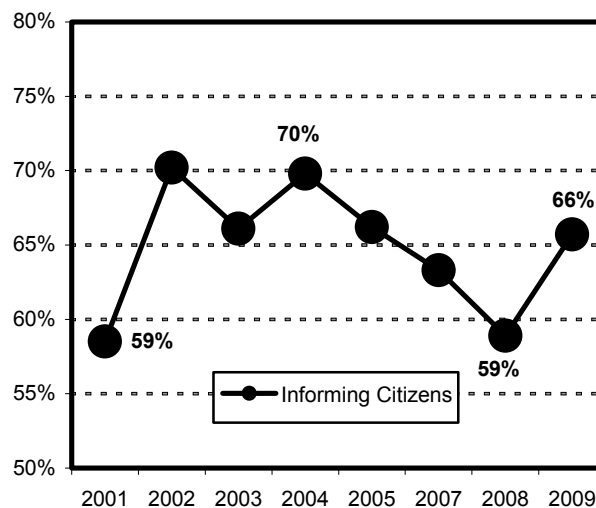
Communication with Citizens

This chapter discusses the communication of information between citizens and City government. It examines the perceptions that citizens have of City-initiated attempts to inform them about governmental activity. It also examines citizen-initiated contact with City government and citizens' perceptions of the quality of work performed by the City as a result of that contact.

City-Initiated Communication

The City informs citizens about public issues and services. This section examines the perceptions that citizens had of City-initiated attempts to inform them about governmental activity.

Figure 18-1: Citizens' Satisfaction with Being Informed by the City



Citizens were asked how well the City kept them informed regarding City government matters that affected them.¹⁰⁹ Figure 18-1 shows that 66 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the City's attempts at informing them. The trend line shows an improvement from 59 percent in 2008 to 66 percent in 2009—a 7 percentage-point improvement. However, this result is well below the 80 percent average score for all City services.

¹⁰⁹ The response rate for this question about being informed by the City was 95 percent.

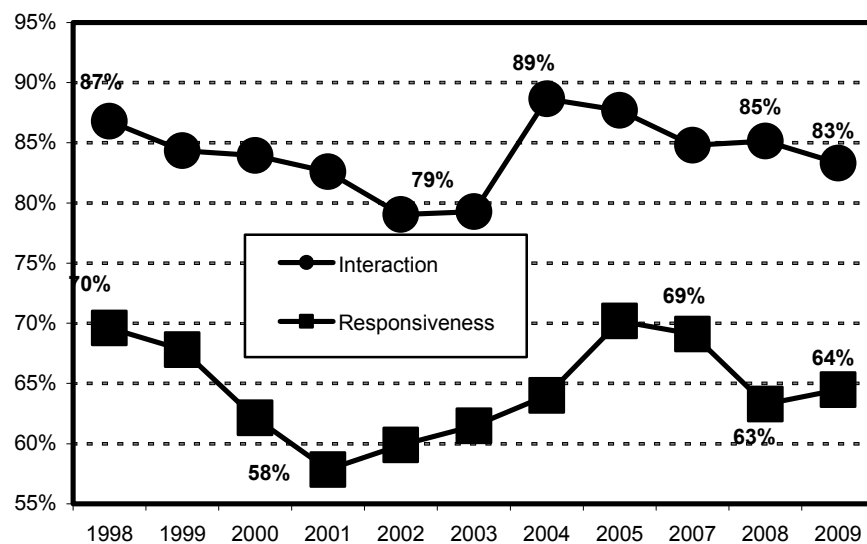
Whites were considerably less satisfied than African Americans about being informed by the City.

Contacting City Government

This section examines citizens' perceptions of their contact with governmental officials and City employees. The Memphis Poll provides extensive details about contacting throughout the report. The data on contacting should be used carefully because of small sample sizes. For example, if just 10 percent of respondents contacted a service, the opinions of only 91 citizens were used to evaluate the service. Despite this limitation, the data are worth examining, but only with that caveat in mind.

Contact was initiated by citizens, and typically involved concerns about specific services and requests for City action. These are called conventional contacts, and included calls about solid waste, streets, vacant lots, rundown houses, abandoned vehicles, and other calls directly to the Mayor's Citizen Service Center. The Memphis Poll asked the citizens about the quality of both interaction with and responsiveness of the City.

Figure 18-2: Citizens' Contacting Interaction and Responsiveness



Interaction involves citizens' satisfaction with their communication with City agencies. Specifically, interaction is a combination of phone professionalism and courtesy.¹¹⁰ Figure 18-2 shows that 83 percent of the citizens were satisfied with

¹¹⁰ The questions asked if the office was courteous *and attentive* during their call for service.

their interactions with City officials. The 2009 results are about the same as in 2007 and 2008.

The results for interaction in the last three years of the Memphis Poll are around the midpoint of the long term trend line. The results for 2009 are above the average score of 80 percent for City services. However, the overall trend shows that the scores for interaction have declined since 2004.

The ratings for responsiveness were substantially lower than interaction. Responsiveness refers to the citizens' ratings for promptness and the performance of the City in solving the concern. Figure 18-2 shows that only 64 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the responsiveness of City officials. Furthermore, the data show a decline of 5 percentage points from 2007 to 2009. The longer term trend had been positive, climbing from a low of 58 percent in 2001 to a score of 69 percent in 2007, before falling again in 2008. The results for 2009 are a slight improvement over 2008.

These results show lower levels of satisfaction with the responsiveness of the City. The results for responsiveness were also far below the average approval rating for City services. Many citizens felt that the City was not solving their problems when they contacted City Hall for assistance.

The Extent of Contacting

This section discusses the level of contacting and the specific agencies that were contacted.

Figure 18-3: Percent of Citizens Contacting the City of Memphis

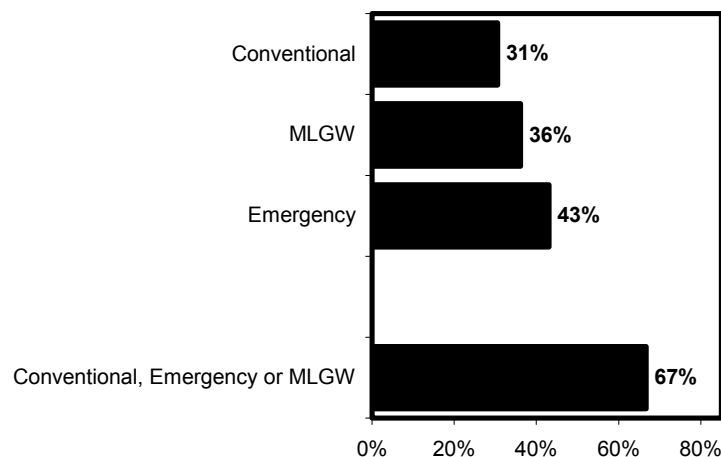


Figure 18-3 shows that 31 percent of the respondents contacted the City in the last year regarding six conventional contacting areas including calls about solid waste, streets, vacant lots, rundown houses, and abandoned vehicles, and other calls directly to the Mayor’s Citizen Service Center (MCSC).

Figure 18-3 shows information was collected about two other sources of citizens’ contacts that are discussed in other areas of this report. Thirty-six (36) percent of the respondents called Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division (MLGW), which made it a major call center for the City of Memphis.¹¹¹ In addition, 43 percent of the respondents made emergency calls for police, fire, and ambulance, making that area another major call center.¹¹²

Figure 18-3 also shows that 67 percent of the citizens contacted at least one of the following areas: conventional, emergency, or MLGW. Overall, these data suggest that the agencies at City Hall received a considerable number of calls from citizens.

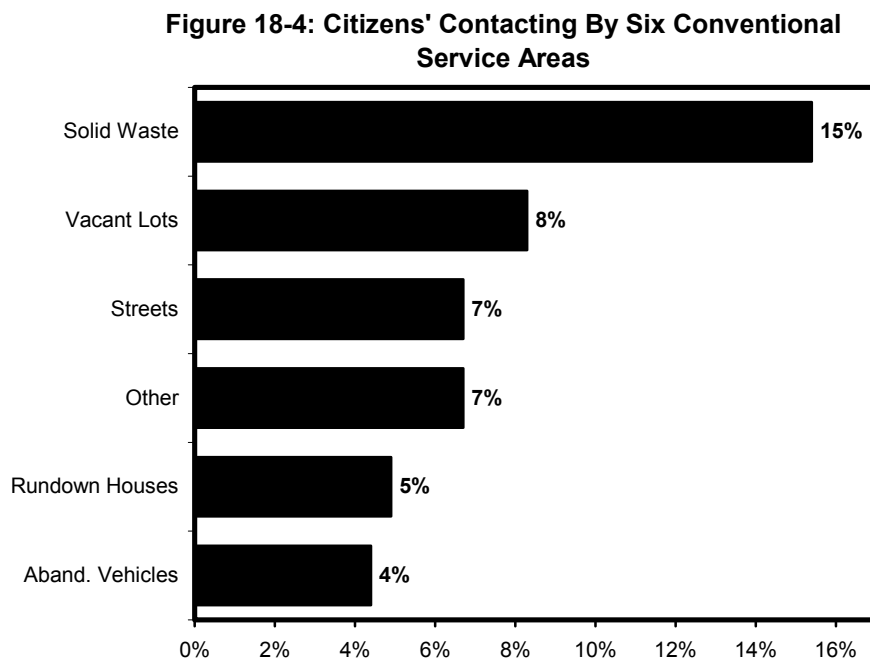


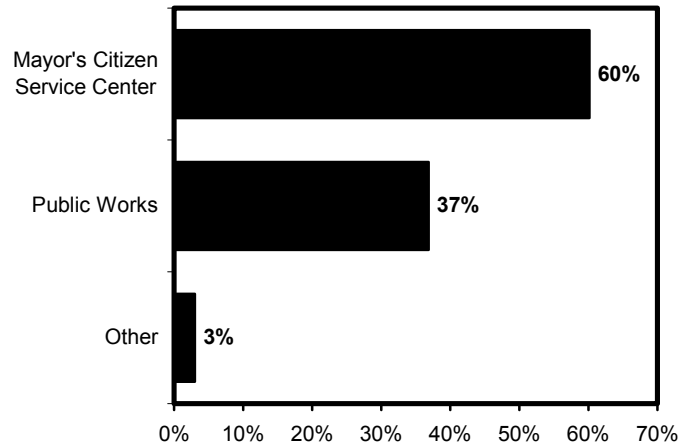
Figure 18-4 displays the results by conventional service area, called a function in this report. The largest number of contacts was made for solid waste services with 15 percent, followed by vacant lots (8 percent), streets (7 percent), other

¹¹¹ Chapter 17 discusses the calls that were made to MLGW.

¹¹² Many of these emergency calls came through the 911 system—see Chapter 5 for information about 911.

concerns¹¹³ (7 percent), rundown houses (5 percent), and abandoned vehicles (4 percent).¹¹⁴

Figure 18-5: Citizens' Contacting By Intake Offices



It was possible to determine the intake agency for the complaints about these functions. Figure 18-5 shows the agencies that performed the intake for the functions discussed above.¹¹⁵ The Mayor's Citizen Service Center (MCSC) had the highest percentage of contacts with 60 percent. This is an increase from earlier Memphis Polls since the MCSC is now the intake agency for weeds on vacant lots, rundown houses, and abandoned vehicles.

The Division of Public Works was the intake agency for 37 percent of the conventional services, making it a large call center. Other entities (Health Department¹¹⁶ for rundown housing and City Council) trailed with a limited number of intake contacts.

Next, the Poll examined if the intake for each function was performed by the operating agency or by the Mayor's Citizen Service Center (MCSC). These data were paired in Figure 18-6 to compare the ratings for the primary operating

¹¹³ "Other concerns" were the complaints that went directly to the Mayor's Citizen Service Center and did not include solid waste, streets, vacant lots, rundown houses or junk cars.

¹¹⁴ These data also provide information about response rates. All of the citizens responded yes or no to the questions of whether they called about these concerns. The percentages, for example 15 percent for solid waste, were the proportion of the polled citizens that called about that problem. If the citizens were asked a subsequent question about this concern only the small percentage, for example 15 percent for solid waste, would respond.

¹¹⁵ The computational method for this section changed from the 2007 Memphis Poll to a percentage of the total cases. This produced an easier form of computation and does not require the estimation found in the 2007 Memphis Poll. This does not change the findings, though the numeric data looks different from earlier Polls.

¹¹⁶ The Memphis Poll did not ask questions about issues addressed by the Health Department, such as calls on rats, mosquitoes, sanitation, or restaurants.

agency and the Mayor's Citizen Service Center. Other intake points were omitted due to the low levels of citizen-initiated contacts.

**Figure 18-6: Intake for Citizens' Contacts
Comparing Operating Agencies and MCSC**

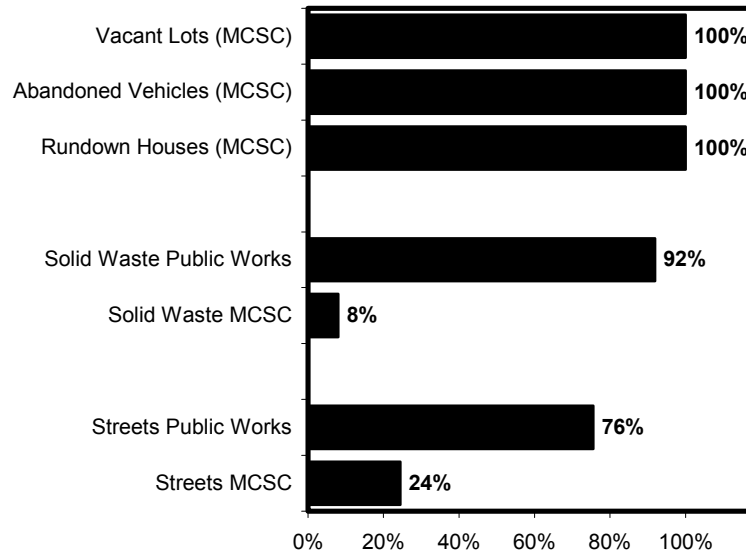


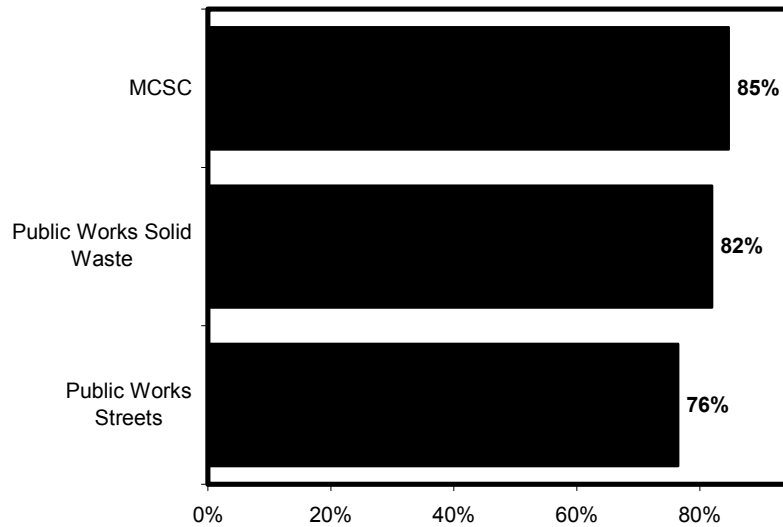
Figure 18-6 displays the results for citizens' contacts by intake source (Mayor's Citizen Service Center or operating agency) and by service area. The MCSC almost exclusively handles calls for vacant lots, rundown houses, and abandoned vehicles.

The Division of Public Works had a high level of contact for two services—this division accounted for 92 percent and 76 percent of solid waste and street maintenance contacts, respectively.

Figure 18-7 examines whether the Mayor's Citizen Service Center or the operating agencies did a better job of interacting with citizens. This measure is an average of the scores for phone professionalism and courtesy.¹¹⁷ The figure shows that citizens were most satisfied with the Mayor's Citizen Service Center (85 percent), closely followed by Public Works solid waste calls (82 percent). Public Works street calls followed with the lowest score (76 percent). The Mayor's Citizens Service Center and Public Works solid waste calls were above the overall 80 percent average for all City services, while Public Works street calls were below that average.

¹¹⁷ The questions asked if the office was courteous *and attentive* during their call for service.

Figure 18-7: Citizens' Perception of Interaction with Major Intake Agencies



The Memphis Poll also examines the responsiveness of the agencies. Responsiveness is the average of promptness in addressing the concern and performance in solving the problem. The data are presented for the agencies that are responsible for addressing the problem.

Figure 18-8: Citizens' Perception of Responsiveness for Contacting City

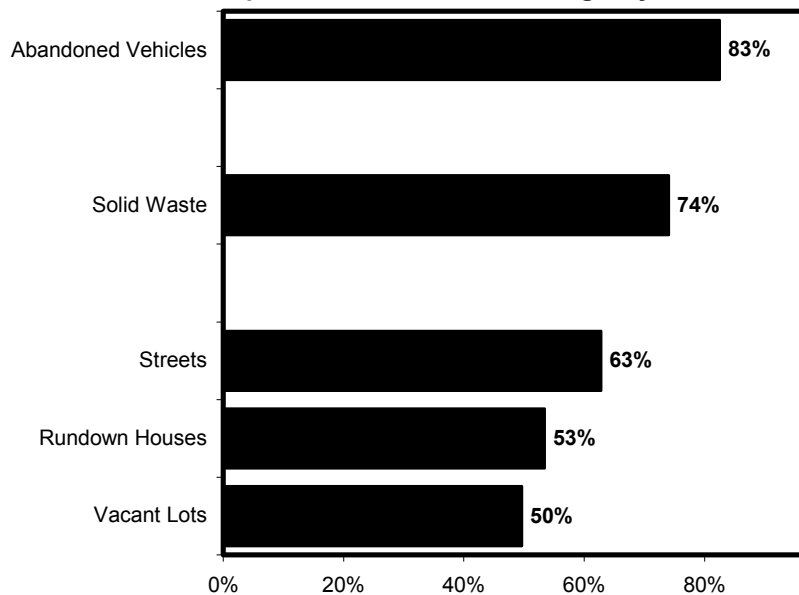


Figure 18-8 shows the ratings for responsiveness. The top tier at 83 percent included only the Division of Community Enhancement's abandoned vehicle service. This score was above the average for City services. The second tier

included the Division of Public Works' solid waste management with a score of 74 percent, which is below the average for City services.

The lowest tier, with scores below 64 percent, included Public Works' streets office at 63 percent, the Division of Community Enhancement's code enforcement, which deals with rundown houses, at 53 percent, and the Division of Community Enhancement's weed office, which deals with vacant lots, at 50 percent. These scores were far below average when compared to overall City services.

Race and Contacting

The aggregation process combined the respondents' rating for all of the conventional contacts with City Hall and examined the difference between African Americans and whites. This showed that there was a very minimal difference between African Americans and whites when averaging all these measures (phone professionalism, courtesy, promptness and performance).

There were some individual differences, but the small sample sizes necessitate caution with using these data. Generally, African Americans were less satisfied than whites with solid waste promptness & performance and phone professionalism for abandoned vehicle calls. Whites were less satisfied than African Americans with rundown housing promptness & performance, weed complaint professionalism & courtesy and street maintenance performance.

Key Findings

- ❑ A very large percentage of the citizens contacted City Hall and they considered contacting an important function of the City.
- ❑ Citizens were less satisfied with the responsiveness of City Hall to their concerns—promptness in responding and solving the problems.
- ❑ The Memphis Poll found that, overall, there was not a difference in the ratings of African Americans and whites on their satisfaction in contacting City Hall.

Chapter 19

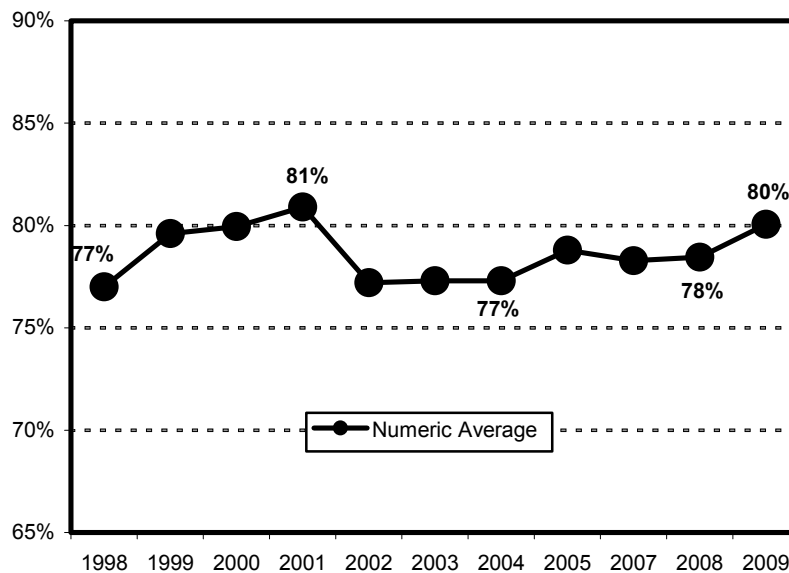
Comparison of Services

This chapter allows the reader to make direct comparisons among various City services. It assesses both the individual service measures and the overall ratings for many divisions of City government. Although complex, this chapter provides the reader with a documented procedure for analyzing services. The reader should carefully review the tables in this chapter to obtain a sense of how the citizens ranked the services provided by the City.

Overall Ranking of the City

Figure 19-1 shows that 80 percent of the citizens were satisfied with the overall services provided by the City of Memphis in 2009.

Figure 19-1: Overall Average for City Services



This measure is a numeric average of the sixty-five¹¹⁸ services examined in this report. The trend data is available from 1998 to the present. It is remarkably consistent, ranging from 77 percent to 81 percent. The results for 2009 are two percentage points higher than in 2008 and very near the highest score since this measure was first calculated.

¹¹⁸ The Memphis Poll added one new service in 2009, the reliability of utilities. This did not change the overall rating of City services, but did have an impact on the overall rating of MGLW.

In summary, the numeric average shows that citizens were more satisfied with City services in 2009 than in any year since 2001.¹¹⁹

Comparing Specific Services

This section provides a comprehensive ranking of services. Because of the large number of services, the above average services were placed in Figure 19-2 and the below average services were placed in Figure 19-3. The average overall approval rating for services, 80 percent, was used for these computations.¹²⁰ These data provide the reader with the opportunity to compare the myriad of services offered by the City of Memphis.

Above Average Services

The highest-rated services had very positive scores that ranged from 90 to 99 percent and are clustered at the top of Figure 19-2.

These services included: Fire Division's EMS (respectfulness, promptness, and performance), Fire Division's Fire Department (promptness, respectfulness, and performance), Division of Public Service and Neighborhoods' Public Library and Information Center (main library, helpfulness of staff, availability of materials, branches, and availability of computers), Division of Park Services (Pink Palace, Botanic Garden, and Zoo), Division of Public Works (solid waste promptness and recycling services), MLGW (field workers, drinking water, and reliability of utilities), and Health Department (vital records).

The second highest tier of above average services ranged from 80 to 89 percent.

These services included: Division of Police Services (respectfulness), Health Department (immunizations, clinics, and restaurant inspections), Division of Park Services (golf courses, large parks, adult athletics, youth athletics, and tennis courts), MLGW (emergencies), Executive Division (Mayor's Citizen Service Center contacting interaction), Division of Public Works (collection of uncontained waste, residential streets, and sewers), and City contacting interaction).

¹¹⁹ See Chapter 2 for a discussion of this average and a broad question that asked how satisfied citizens are with City services.

¹²⁰ This includes rounding—for example 79.8 would be coded at 80 percent.

Figure 19-2: Above Average Services

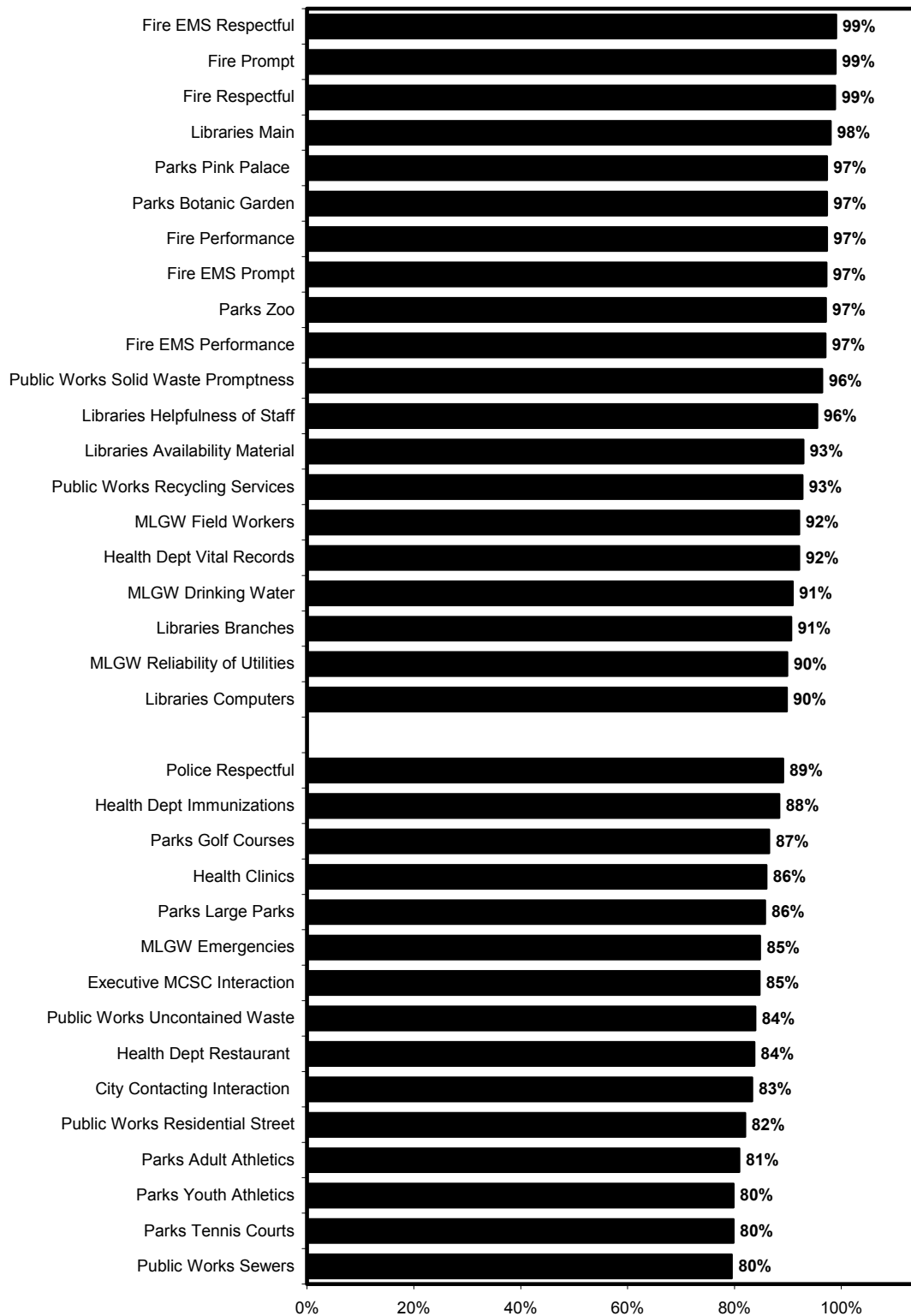
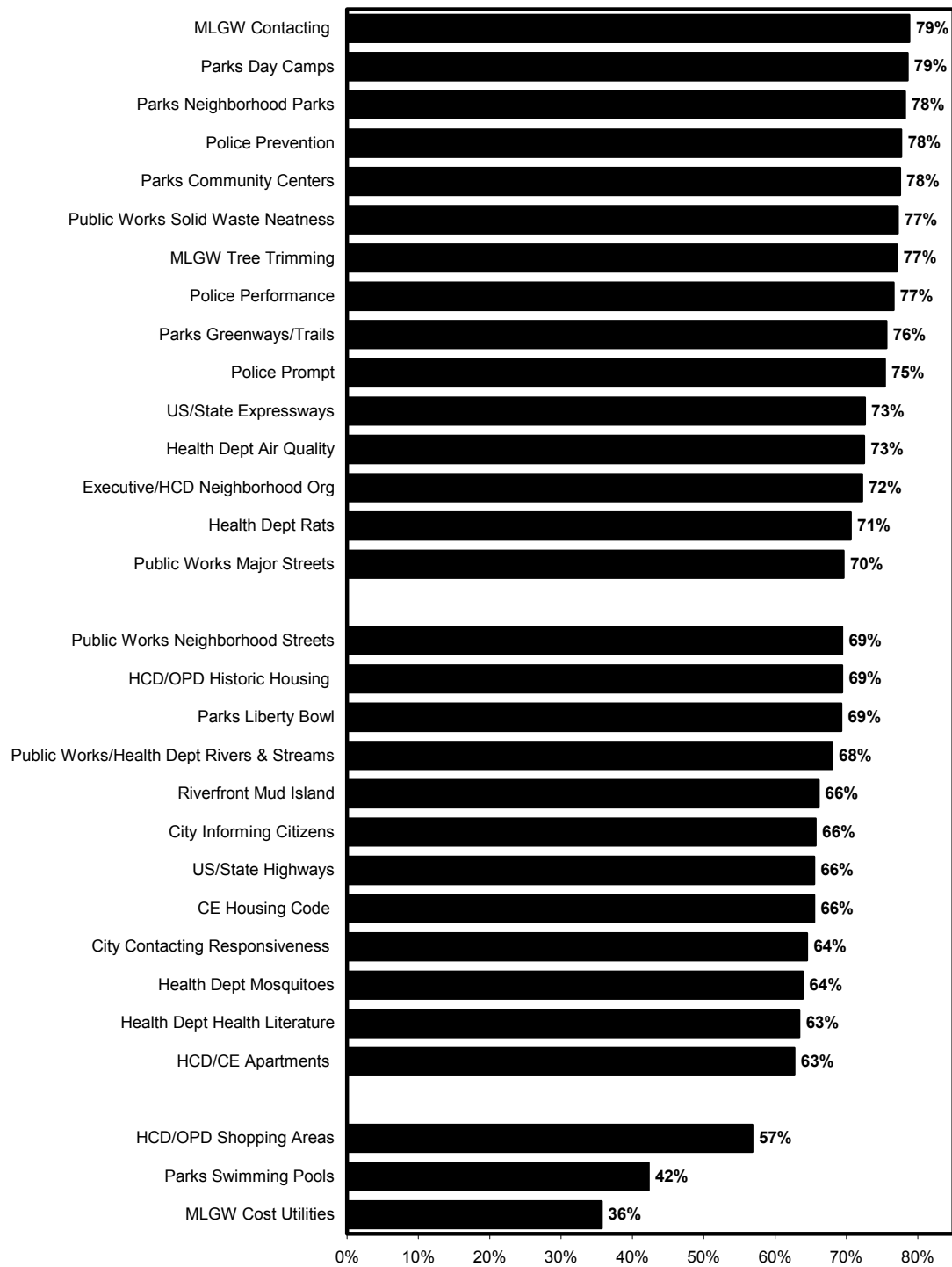


Figure 19-3: Below Average Services



Below Average Services

The below average services are displayed in Figure 19-3. Again, the average overall approval score for City services was 80 percent. However, below average does not mean services were inadequate. It simply means that services were not as highly rated as other services in the City. However, as the services reach levels well below average, they may be much more problematic.

Slightly below average services ranged from 70 to 79 percent. These services included: MLGW (contacting and tree trimming), Division of Park Services (day camps, neighborhood parks, community centers, and greenways & trails), Division of Police Services (prevention, performance, and promptness), Division of Public Works (solid waste neatness and maintaining major streets), US/State (Expressways), Health Department (air quality and controlling rats), and Executive Division & the Division of Housing and Community Development (helping neighborhood organizations).

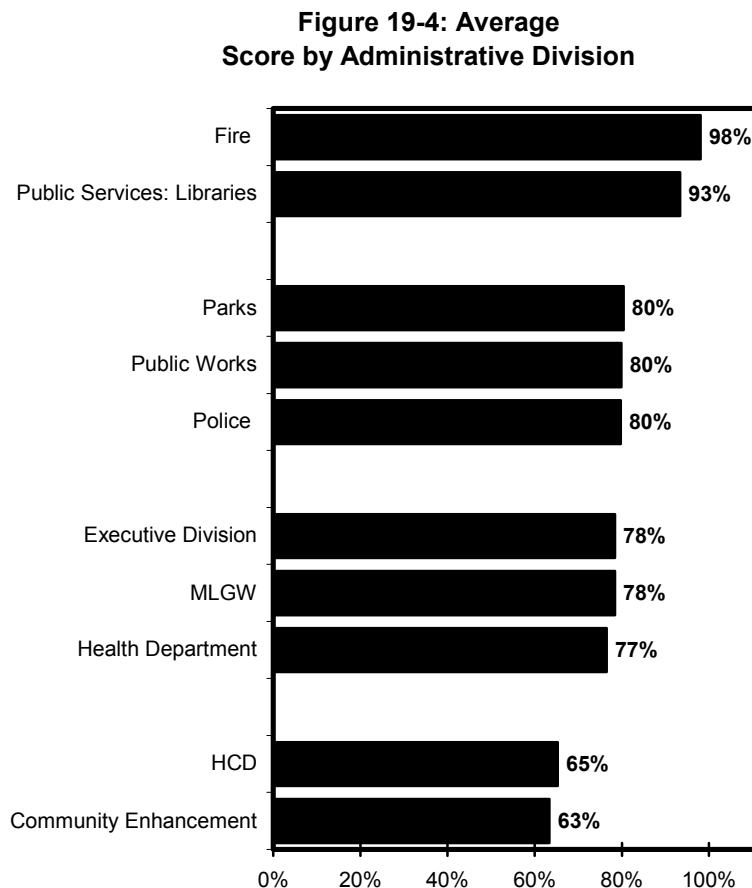
Some services were somewhat below average and ranged from 63 to 69 percent. These services included: Division of Public Works (maintaining neighborhood streets), Division of Housing and Community Development & Office of Planning and Development (historic housing), Division of Park Services (Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium), Division of Public Works & Health Department (rivers and streams), Riverfront Development Corporation (Mud Island Park), City (informing citizens), US/State (highways), Division of Community Enhancement (housing code), City contacting responsiveness, Health Department (controlling mosquitoes and health literature), and Division of Housing and Community Development & Division of Community Enhancement (apartments and public housing).

One service was further below average at 57 percent, and that was Division of Housing and Community Development & Office of Planning and Development's shopping areas.

The very lowest services this year, ranging from 36 to 42 percent, were Division of Park Services' public swimming pools and Memphis Light, Gas and Water's cost of utilities.

Comparison by Divisions

Figure 19-4 compares the overall ratings for each division by averaging the scores of the specific service categories for which they were responsible.



The highest-rated divisions had ratings from 93 to 98 percent.

The Division of Fire Services stands out as the highest-rated division with 98 percent approval. Fire Services has been an exceptional agency for all of the years of the Memphis Poll. The citizens' ratings are exemplary and this has to be considered one of the highest rated fire services agencies in the country.

The second highest-rated agency was the Division of Public Services and Neighborhood's Public Library and Information Center at 93 percent, approximately the same score as in 2008. Once again, citizens saw the libraries as one of the most impressive services of the City government. It has now been administratively absorbed by the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods. This division has several other functions besides the library

center that should be examined in the 2009 Memphis Poll. These include animal services (see Chapter 9 for a discussion of concerns about loose dogs).

The second tier of average divisions included the Division of Park Services, Division of Public Works, and the Division of Police Services. Each scored 80 percent putting them at the overall approval rating of all City services.

The next tier had slightly below average ratings. These included the Executive Division (78 percent), Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division (78 percent), and the Health Department (77 percent).

Two divisions had an overall rating well below average – the Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD) with a rating of 65 percent and the Division of Community Enhancement (CE) with a rating of 63 percent. Both of these agencies deal with neighborhood-level development and maintenance issues.

The Office of Planning and Development (OPD) would also be well below average, if it had been rated this year. OPD was excluded because it has so little involvement with service delivery. The Division of General Services was not ranked since its single rated function – responding to complaints about vacant lots – was moved to the Division of Community Enhancement.

Trends for Divisions

The Memphis Poll provides overall trend data for City divisions. Figure 19-5 shows the four divisions for which there are data for the entire years of the Memphis Poll.

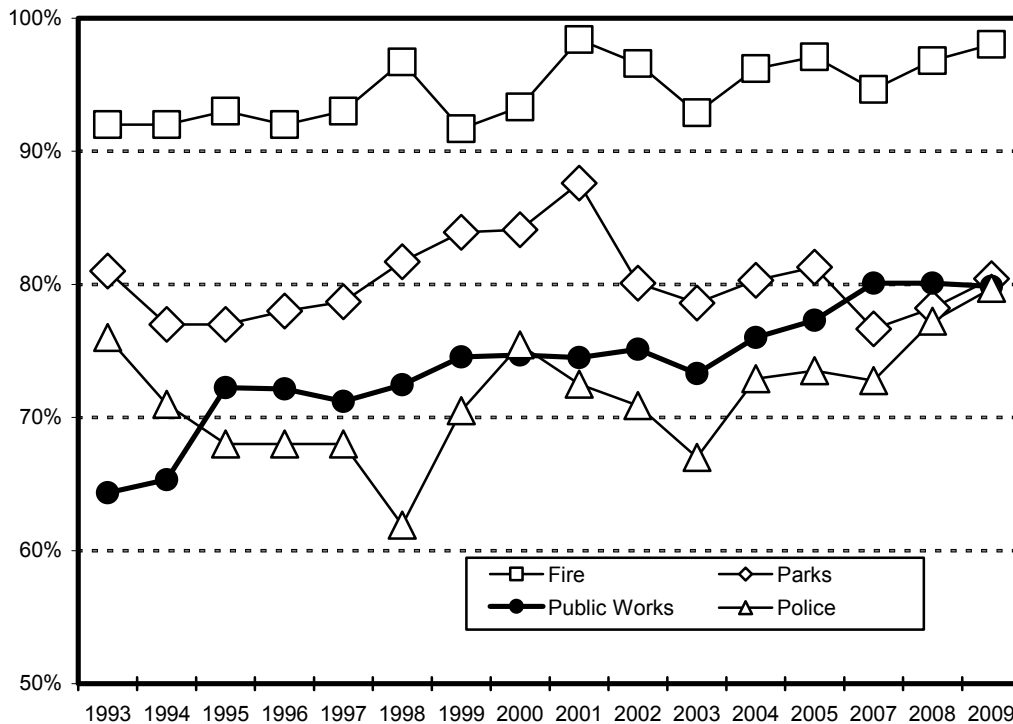
The Division of Fire Services has the most impressive trend line. All of its overall average measures during the history of the Poll have exceeded 90 percent. This is a division that has an excellent long-term track record in the Memphis Poll.

The next three divisions were all at the 80 percent average rating for overall City services in 2009.

The Division of Park Services was rated at the 80 percent average score for overall City services. There are some interesting aspects to the trend line. From 1994 to 2001, the Division of Park Services made incremental improvements in its

services that were recognized by the citizens. The increases in any one year were small, but overall the trend line shows a consistent improvement in services. There was a precipitous decline from 2001 to 2002, and in the next three years services stabilized around 80 percent. In 2007, the division slipped below the City's overall average, then improved the next two years. These results show a hopefulness that a new very positive trend of improving services has emerged.

Figure 19-5: Overall Averages for Fire, Parks, Public Works, and Police

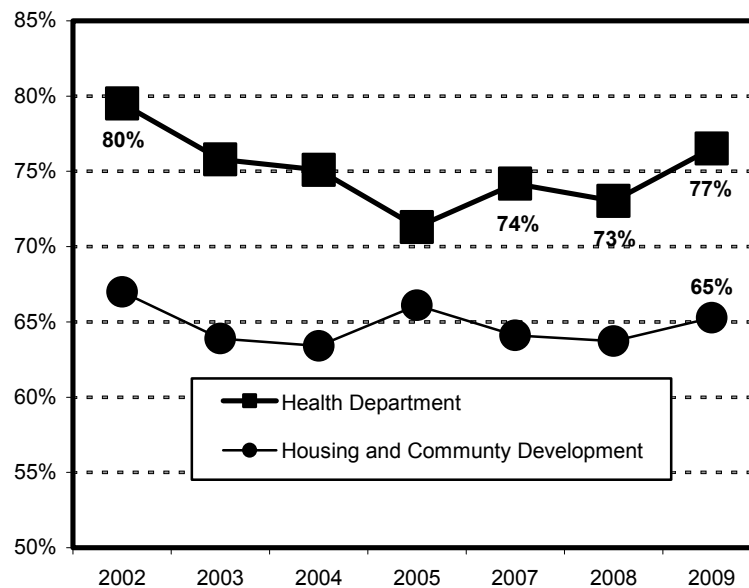


The Division of Public Works was at the 80 percent approval rating for all City services. The trend line shows mostly consistent improvements from year to year.

Finally, the Division of Police Services is also at the 80 percent overall average score. Figure 19-5 shows that the division notably improved by 7 percentage points from 2007 to 2009. However, the trend line is the most complex of any division. The overall trend line for the police shows four distinct patterns over the sixteen years of the Memphis Poll. The first period from 1993 to 1998 shows a steep decline in ratings, followed by two years of improved ratings from 1998 to 2000. In fact, the improvement was very large and returned the division to the level it enjoyed in 1993. The third period from 2000 to 2003 shows an incremental decline in police ratings. The fourth period between 2003 and 2009

shows a distinct improvement and stabilization in the citizens' ratings of the police, especially with the last 2 years showing improvements.

Figure 19-6: Overall Averages for Health Department and Division of Housing and Community Development



There are some additional trend charts for services with fewer years of information available. These services are displayed in four separate charts since the trend lines would otherwise overlap and be difficult to read.

Figure 19-6 provides the trend line for the Health Department. It shows a 4 percentage-point improvement from 2008 to 2009. The results appear to show marginal annual improvements since 2005.

Figure 19-6 shows the trend line for the Division of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The line is relatively flat showing consistency in ratings over time, albeit at a level far below the overall average for City services. Code enforcement was removed from this agency in 2009, and several new services were added to the division in 2005, but these changes did not appear to affect the ratings.

The Executive Division began to administer the Mayor's Citizen Service Center and the Center for Neighborhoods in 2007. The name of the Center for Neighborhoods has been changed to Neighborhood Relations.

**Figure 19-7: Overall Average for Executive Division:
Mayor's Citizen Service Center and Neighborhood
Relations**

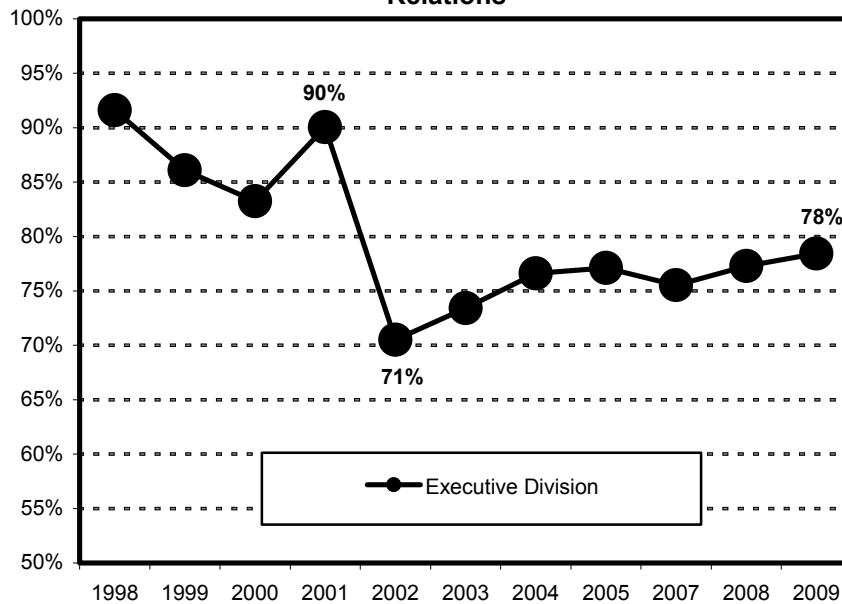


Figure 19-7 provides ratings going back to 1998 when these services were in the Division of Public Services and Neighborhoods. The ratings for the Executive Division show improvements from 2002 to 2004, with an overall stabilization of the ratings from 2004 to 2009. For the last five years, the trend line has been relatively flat and the ratings remain slightly below average. The ratings are also much lower than the time period of 1998 to 2001.

**Figure 19-8: Overall Averages for Public
Libraries and MLGW**

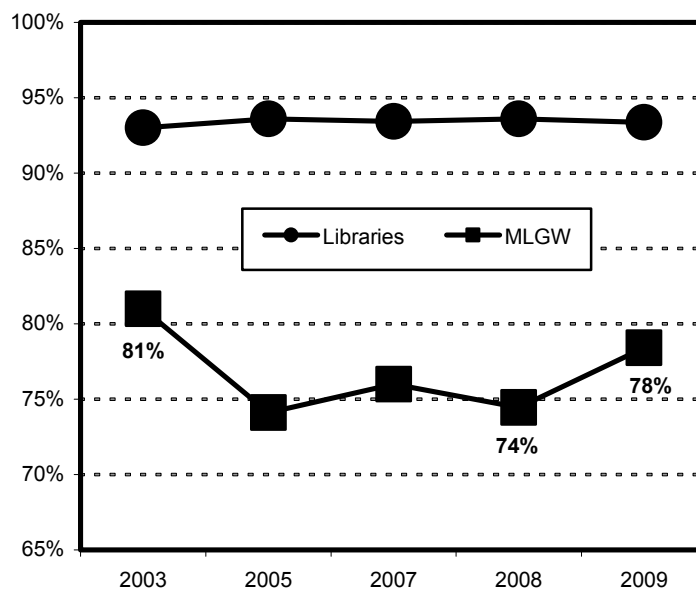


Figure 19-8 shows the trend line data for the Division of Public Services and Neighborhood's Public Library and Information Center and Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division (MLGW). The Memphis Poll did not ask questions about these two agencies in 2004.

The Public Library and Information Center enjoys consistently high ratings. It is among the "signature" services of the City of Memphis. The ratings for this agency remain very consistent from 2003 to 2009. In addition, the ratings are above 90 percent, which places libraries among the elite of City services.

The Memphis Poll showed that MLGW experienced a 4 percentage-point improvement from 2008 to 2009, but half of that was due to the addition of a new question on the reliability of utilities to the Poll. The overall conclusion is that the results for MLGW have been mostly flat since 2005.

Figure 19-9: Overall Averages for Division of Community Enhancement

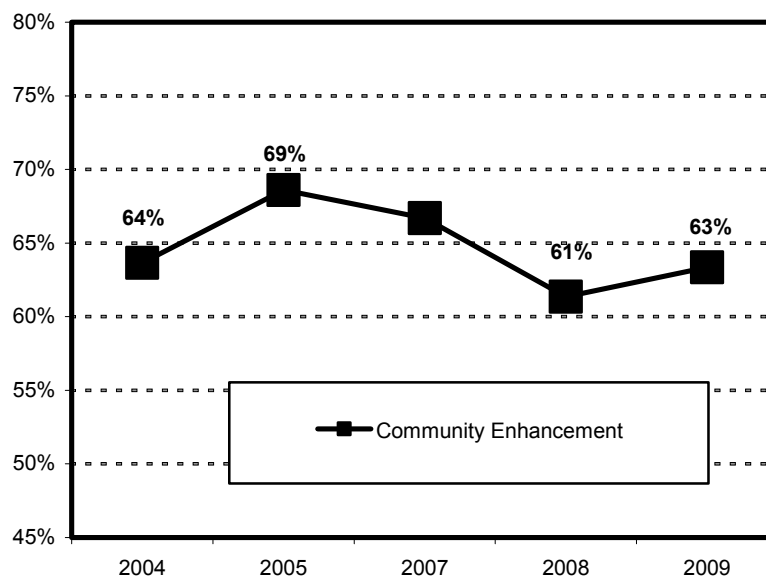


Figure 19-9 shows the results for the Division of Community Enhancement. This is a very difficult agency to analyze for two reasons. First, it came into operation in 2008 so it does not have a long history of ratings generated by the division itself. Most of the service measures prior to 2008 are based on programs previously administered by other divisions of City government. Second, as discussed in Chapter 11, there are positive signs emerging that show the division is having an impact on issues long neglected by City government.

The overall measures for the Division of Community Enhancement were the average of three scores: housing code enforcement, apartment & public housing maintenance, and responsiveness to calls to City Hall complaining about rundown houses, vacant lots, and abandoned cars. Figure 19-9 shows a 2 percentage-point improvement since 2008. However, the analysis from Chapter 11 points to positive signs that future years will continue to bring improvements for this division which has been give a difficult job by the City.

Key Findings

- ❑ The Division of Fire services has an impressive, long-term track record in the Memphis Poll with the highest ratings over time.
- ❑ The Public Library and Information Center also has received very high ratings which were consistent with the ratings from prior years.
- ❑ According to the citizens, the least effective services in City government were MLGW's cost of utilities and Division of Park Services' public swimming pools.
- ❑ The new Division of Community Enhancement has a difficult job in front of it—there are positive signs that it can turn around the ratings for services that have long been neglected.

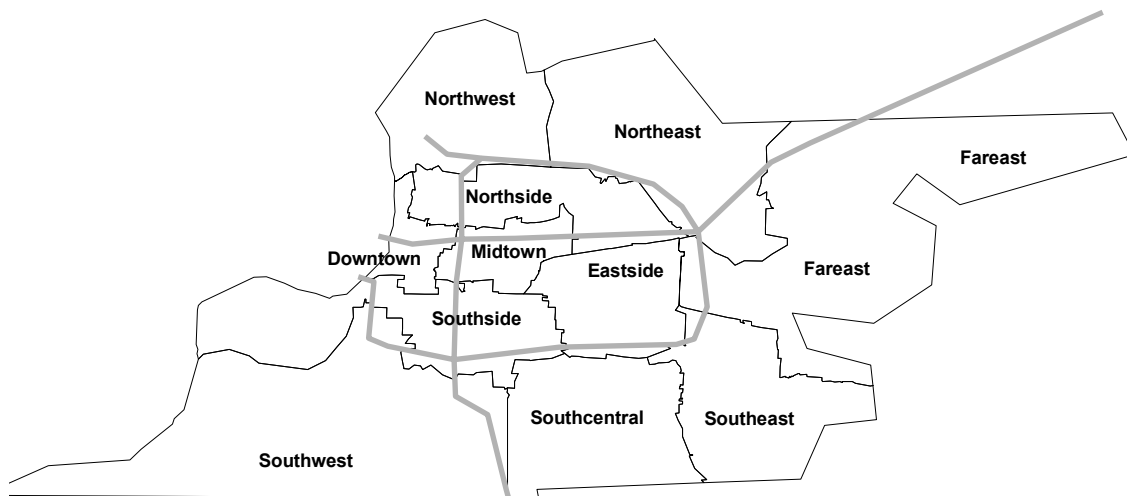
Chapter 20

Technical Issues and Questionnaire

The Polling Map

The Memphis Poll interviewed citizens from each section of the City in proportion to the population of the City. An area map was created defining various sections of the City. The results for each section of the City are displayed in charts throughout this report. This area map displays the Fareast area differently than the actual borders so that the data can be more easily understood. Figure 20-1 shows the base map that was generated for this effort.

Figure 20-1
Simplified Map
Memphis Polling Areas



The map is a simplification that allows the reader to visually understand how the information is being analyzed. The map includes eleven areas that represent different sections of the City. The names of the areas are geographical and do not necessarily reflect commonly used names. The areas are based on zip codes. It was important in creating these areas to include sections of both the older City and the newer annexed areas. Some conventions have been used in the naming of the areas that emphasize the ability to display the area names in the maps. For

example, “Fareast” is used to name the area that includes Cordova, Countrywood, and other sections that are at the periphery of the City.

The number of respondents from each area is displayed in Figure 20-2. The responses ranged from the smallest polled areas, Northwest with 51 citizens, to the largest area, Southeast with 118 citizens. The differences in citizens by area were a function of the zip codes that were available and a desire to keep areas somewhat similar in characteristics. On the other hand, an attempt was also made to include as many citizens as possible from each area.

Figure 20-2: Number of Respondents by Area

Name of Area	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Northwest	51	5.6%
Downtown	56	5.5%
Southcentral	55	6.5%
Midtown	75	7.2%
Northeast	77	8.5%
Fareast	79	8.8%
Eastside	94	9.9%
Southside	95	10.5%
Northside	101	11.1%
Southwest	114	12.5%
Southeast	118	14.2%
N= with Rounding Error	915	100.3%

The findings of the Memphis Poll examined by section of the City must be used carefully since each area has a smaller sample size than the information used for the City as a whole. There have been some requests to provide data for even smaller areas by zip codes. However, the Memphis Poll will not provide this data because of the instability of smaller sample sizes.

The total number of respondents in the 2009 Memphis Poll was 915, which is a very large poll size. Other studies examining Memphis often have poll sizes that range from 300 to 600 and very few reach the number used in the Memphis Poll.

Polling Questionnaire

The following section lists the questions from the 2009 Memphis Poll.

**2009 City of Memphis Poll
Interviewing Questionnaire
October, 2008**

Hello, my name is _____ and I work for Yacoubian Market Research of Memphis. We are conducting our yearly poll for the City of Memphis and would like to know how you feel about major issues and the services the City provides to Memphians. We don't know your name and we don't sell anything.

First of all, do you live in the City of Memphis or outside the City?
Are you at least 18 years old?

Please tell me how you would grade the quality of the following City services. Your choices are: very good, good, not too good, and not good at all. If you don't know anything about the service please tell me.

1. The Memphis Zoo
2. The Pink Palace Museum
3. Memphis Botanic Garden
4. Mud Island River Park
5. Public golf courses
6. Public tennis courts
7. Large parks such as Overton and Audubon
8. Your neighborhood park
9. Adult athletic programs such as softball, volleyball and basketball leagues
10. Youth athletic programs
11. Parks Department summer day camps for children
12. Skipped sequence number
13. Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium
14. Public swimming pools
15. Neighborhood community centers
16. Greenways and walking trails

Now I am going to read a list of issues. For each one, I want you to tell me if you think each issue is: not a problem, a slight problem, a somewhat serious problem, or a very serious problem in your neighborhood.

17. Litter on neighborhood streets
18. Dogs running loose
19. Drainage after rains
20. Maintenance of City alleys—if your neighborhood does not have alleys, please let me know
21. Inadequate street lights
22. Trash or weeds on vacant lots
23. Tires left on the street for more than two weeks

- 24. Abandoned cars/trucks in your neighborhood
- 25. Run-down houses
- 26. Pollution in rivers and creeks
- 27. Speeding on neighborhood streets
- 28. Gang activity in your neighborhood
- 29. Drug sales
- 30. Burglaries
- 31. Violent crimes
- 32. Guns in your neighborhood
- 33. Less serious property crimes such as larceny, theft, and motor vehicle theft

34. In the past year, do you feel that the crime rate in your neighborhood has been increasing, decreasing, or staying the same?

Now I would like to read several statements about the police department. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements:

- 35. Police are respectful to people in your neighborhood.
- 36. Police are quick in answering calls to your neighborhood.
- 37. Police do a good job preventing crime in your neighborhood.
- 38. In the past year, did you or anyone in your household call or contact the Memphis police because you were a victim of a crime, witness to a crime, or to report something suspicious? Yes No

IF Yes

39. On this occasion, the overall performance of the police was good. (your choices are: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

- 40. The Police Department's Blue Crush Program assigns specific officers to high crime areas called hot spots. They do saturation patrols, work under cover, and investigate high risk offenders. Are you familiar with the Police Department's Blue Crush Program? Yes No

IF Yes

41. Have you been aware of Blue Crush officers working in your neighborhood during the last year? Yes No

IF Yes

- 42. Have Blue Crush officers done a good job in reducing serious crime in your neighborhood? Yes No
- 43. Have Blue Crush officers closed down places with drug sales in your neighborhood? Yes No

Now I am going to ask you about the fire department. Again, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements:

- 44. The fire department crews are respectful to people in your neighborhood.
- 45. The fire department is quick in answering calls to your neighborhood.
- 46. In the past year, did you or anyone in your household call or contact the fire department? Yes No

IF Yes

- 47. On this occasion, the overall performance of the fire department was good. (your choices are: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

Now I'm going to ask you about the City ambulance and paramedic services (EMS). Again, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with these statements:

- 48. The ambulance and paramedic crews are respectful to people in your neighborhood.
- 49. The ambulance and paramedic crews are quick in answering calls in your neighborhood.
- 50. In the past year did you or anyone in your household call or contact the City to request an ambulance or paramedics because of an emergency? Yes No

IF Yes

- 51. On this occasion, the overall performance of the City ambulance crew and paramedics was good. (your choices are: strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree).

NOTE: ASK FOLLOWING QUESTIONS OF ALL RESPONDENTS

Now I would like to read some statements about garbage collection services. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.

- 52. Do you receive garbage collection services from the City of Memphis? Yes No
- 53. The garbage collectors do not spill trash and garbage when emptying your cart.
- 54. The garbage collectors consistently empty your cart on the collection day.
- 55. The garbage collectors consistently empty the recyclables on the collection day.
- 56. The garbage collectors pick up your curbside trash such as limbs and appliances within one week.

Now I would like to read some statements about street repair. Again, please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with each statement.

- 57. The City's expressways, such as I-240 and I-55, are well-maintained and potholes are patched in a reasonable time.

58. The U.S. and State highways, such as Elvis Presley Blvd, Poplar Ave, Jackson Ave, Summer Ave, Lamar Ave, and Austin Peay Hwy, are well-maintained & potholes are patched in a reasonable time.

59. The major City streets, such as Frayser Blvd, Walnut Grove Rd, Park Ave, Millbranch, Mendenhall, White Station, and Yale Rd, are well-maintained and potholes are patched in a reasonable time.

60. The streets in your neighborhood are well-maintained and potholes are patched in a reasonable time.

61. The street in front of your residence is well-maintained and potholes are patched in a reasonable time.

Please grade the importance of each of the following City functions as it is related to improving the overall quality of life in Memphis. How important is it for Memphis City government to provide the following City functions? Your choices are: very important, important, not important.

62. Building new streets and roads

63. Repaving and patching potholes on existing streets

64. Providing fire protection

65. Cleaning public areas by sweeping streets, picking up litter, mowing vacant lots

66. Providing police protection against crime

67. Providing recreational programs and park facilities for children, adults, and seniors

68. Addressing environmental quality of the air, rivers, and streams

69. Providing garbage collection services

70. Funding public learning groups such as the zoo, the museums, and the arts

71. Funding the public libraries

72. Funding the City School system

73. Communicating with citizens and responding to their requests

74. Skipped- Providing community-wide health and disease prevention services

75. Skipped- Delivering electricity, natural gas and water services

76. Planning for and responding to natural disasters, terrorists and diseases

77. Reducing blight, revitalizing neighborhoods and providing affordable housing

78. Providing property tax breaks (called PILOTS) to businesses who would then create new jobs

79. Providing job training for unemployed and underemployed Memphians

80. Funding improvements to Liberty Bowl Memorial Stadium, the Pyramid, and Convention Center

81. Funding improvements for the Riverfront such as the boat landing, walkways, and sidewalk cafes

These next few items deal with neighborhood issues. For each item, please tell me how well the City is performing these tasks in your neighborhood. Respond only if they are relevant to your neighborhood. Your choices are very good, good, not too good, and not good at all.

- 82. Improving the condition of shopping areas in your neighborhood
- 83. Improving the quality of rivers and streams in your neighborhood
- 84. Helping your neighborhood organization
- 85. Requiring property owners to maintain houses in your neighborhood
- 86. Preserving historic housing and buildings in your neighborhood
- 87. Improving apartment buildings and public housing in your neighborhood
- 88. Maintaining the City sewer system in your neighborhood

How would you grade the following services dealing with health and safety? Your choices are very good, good, not too good, and not good at all.

- 89. Health inspectors' grading of sanitation & cleanliness at Memphis area restaurants
- 90. Controlling rats in your neighborhood
- 91. Controlling mosquitoes in your neighborhood
- 92. Providing health education and disease prevention literature
- 93. Providing immunizations and immunization records
- 94. Addressing the quality of the Memphis air
- 95. Providing vital records such as birth and death certificates
- 96. Providing quality health care at the Health Loop clinics, also called public clinics or the Health Department clinics

Please tell me how you would grade the quality of the City library services. Your choices are very good, good, not too good, and not good at all. If you don't know anything about the service, please tell me.

- 97. Availability of library materials
- 98. Availability of computers and internet services
- 99. Helpfulness of library staff
- 100. Overall quality of the main library
- 101. Overall quality of your local library branch

How would you grade Memphis Light, Gas and Water (MLGW) in each of these specific areas? Your choices are very good, good, not too good, and not good at all.

- 102. Quality of drinking water
- 103. Cost of utilities
- 104. Responding to gas and electric emergencies in your neighborhood
- 105. Courtesy of field workers in your neighborhood
- 106. Satisfaction with tree trimming around power lines in your neighborhood
- 107. Reliability of light, gas and water services

108. I would like to ask you about some specific services. In the past year, did you contact an office concerning the City's solid waste management, garbage, trash services, or the recycling hotline? Yes No

IF Yes

109. Which office did you contact: The Solid Waste Department, The Solid Waste Office, Public Works, Mayor's Citizen Service Center, City Council, or other?

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

110. The office answered the phone professionally.

111. The office responded to your concern promptly.

112. The office was courteous and attentive.

113. The concern was solved as a result of the contact.

114. In the past year did you contact an office concerning maintenance of the City streets? Yes No

IF Yes,

115. Which office did you contact: Public Works, The City Street Office, Mayor's Citizen Service Center, City Council, or other?

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

116. The office answered the phone professionally.

117. The office responded to your concern promptly.

118. The office was courteous and attentive.

119. The concern was solved as a result of the contact.

120. In the past year did you contact an office concerning weeds and trash on vacant lots? Yes No

IF Yes

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

121. The office answered the phone professionally.

122. The office responded to your concern promptly.

123. The office was courteous and attentive.

124. The concern was solved as a result of the contact.

125. In the past year did you contact an office concerning abandoned vehicles and junk cars? Yes No

IF Yes

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

- 126. The office answered the phone professionally.
- 127. The office responded to your concern promptly.
- 128. The office was courteous and attentive.
- 129. The concern was solved as a result of the contact.

130. In the past year did you contact an office concerning a problem with rundown houses? Yes No

IF Yes

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

- 131. The office answered the phone professionally.
- 132. The office responded to your concern promptly.
- 133. The office was courteous and attentive.
- 134. The concern was solved as a result of the contact.

135. In the past year, did you or anyone in your household contact the Mayor's Citizen Service Center for concerns other than those mentioned above? Yes No

IF Yes

- 136. The office answered the phone professionally.
- 137. The office was courteous and attentive.

138. In the past year, did you or anyone in your household contact MLGW? Yes No

IF Yes

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

- 139. The office answered the phone professionally.
- 140. The office responded to your concern promptly.
- 141. The office was courteous and attentive.
- 142. The concern was resolved as a result of the contact.

143. In the past year, did you contact 911 for police emergency services? Yes No

IF Yes

Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements about 911:

144. The dispatcher answered the phone within 5 rings.

145. The dispatcher answered the phone professionally.

146. The dispatcher was courteous and attentive.

147. How satisfied are you with how the City keeps you informed about City government matters that affect you? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

148. Now I would like to ask a broader question about services. In general, are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied, with the overall services provided by the City of Memphis?

149. In general, how would you rate Memphis as a place to live? Are you very satisfied, satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with Memphis as a place to live?

150. One year from now, do you think your neighborhood will be a better place to live, about the same, or a worse place to live?

Before we finish, I need some general information about your background.

151. How would you describe your race? (Your choices are: Caucasian, African-American, Hispanic, Asian, or none of these)

152. I don't need your name, but, may I please have your home zip code?

Thank you very much. Your time, patience, and participation are greatly appreciated. You have made an important contribution to our City.